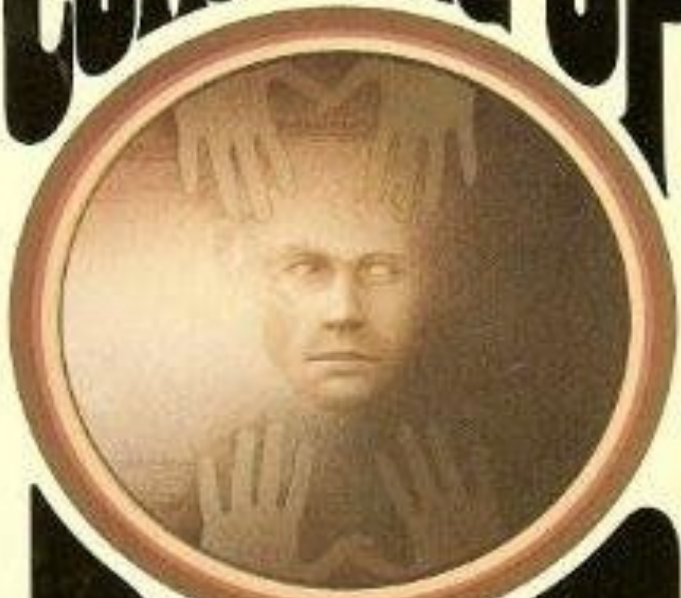
The most amazing occult experiment of all time!

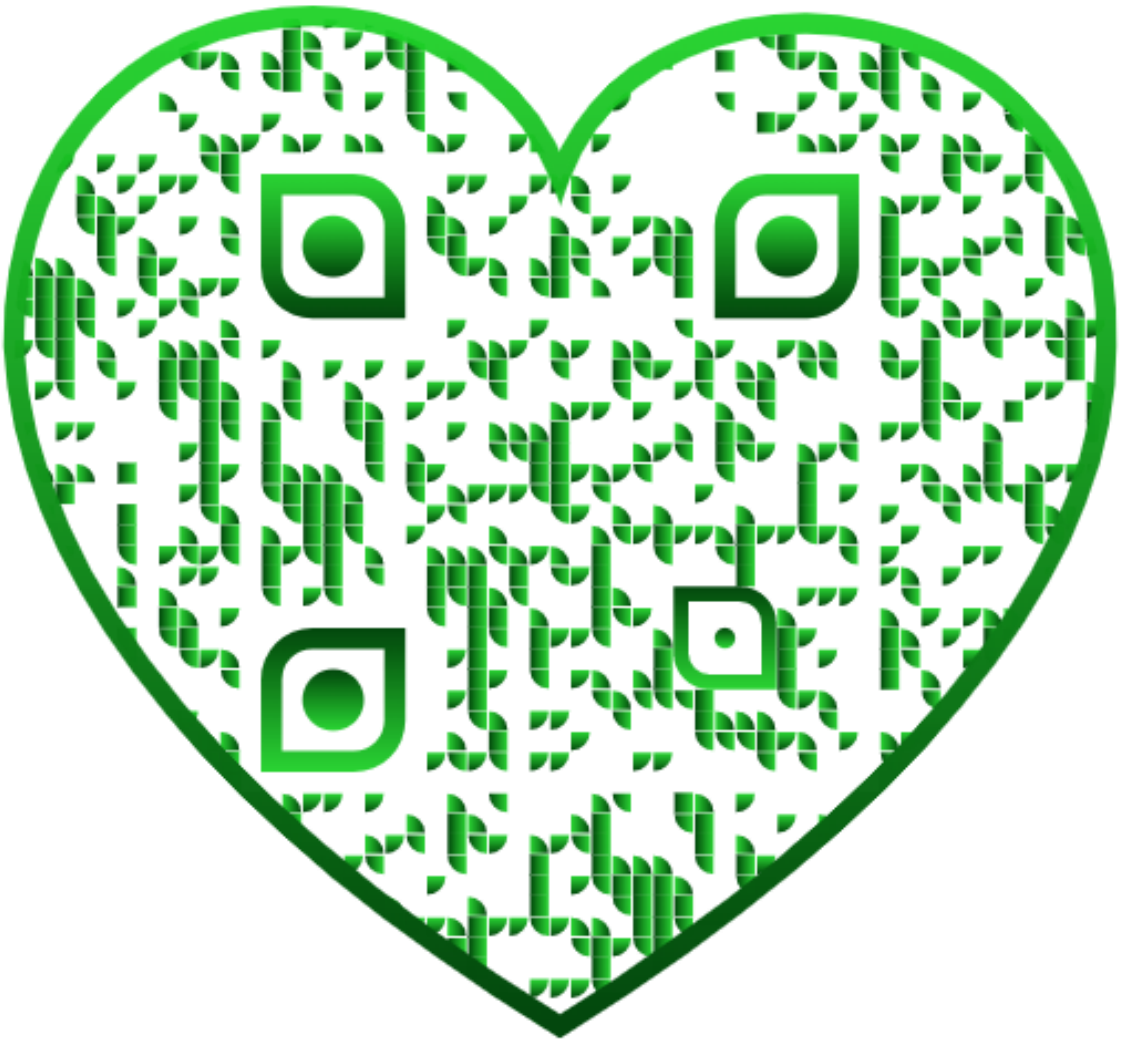
An Adventure in Psychokinesis

POCKET
81103
$1.75

CONJURING UP PHILIP



Iris M. Owen with Margaret Sparrow



Conjuring up Philip

AN ADVENTURE IN PSYCHOKINESIS

Iris M. Owen
with Margaret Sparrow

Fitzhenry & Whiteside
Toronto Montreal Winnipeg Vancouver

Introduction by Dr A. R G. Owen, Director, New Horizons Research Foundation xi

1. The Purpose of the Experiment.....1
2. The Participants in the Experiment.....7
3. A Diflerent Approach — and Philip Responds Unexpectedly.....21
4. How the Group Helped Philip to tell his Story 30
5. Philip's Story is Filled Out by the Group.....40
6. The Physical Phenomena Produced.....50
7. More Physical Phenomena.....66
8. Learning a Psychological Skill.....73
9. The Composite Personality of Philip.....83
10. What is the Nature of the Physical Phenomena? 89
11. Comparison with Some Poltergeist Cases.....102
12. Examples of Hauntings..... 115
13 Thought-Forms and Hallucinations.....122
14. The Relationship of the Philip Phenomena to Spiritualistic Belief.....131
15. Significance of the Philip Experiment for Further Research.....150
16. Personal Comments by the GroupMembers.....162
17. The Psychology of the Poltergeist Reaction *Dr Jorl VP baton,* Pier *Chairman of I be Toronto Society for Psychical Research*..... 172
18. Postscript.....186
19. The Completed Story' of Philip *Margaret (Sufi Sparrow* 197

Appendices

1. Historical Note on Philip's Home.....208
2. Historical Concordance to the Legend of Philip 209
3. The Experiment to Date.....211

Bibliography.....215

Introduction

This is one of the most unusual and interesting books ever printed.

It was written for two reasons; first to be a scientific document of some importance, and second to satisfy a keen public demand for information. The story of how our Toronto group succeeded in creating the Philip phenomena first appeared in an article with an academic and unsensational title in our journal *New Horizons,* which enjoys only a small circulation, and (hen was told in a specially made movie. Neither the movie nor the article can be said to have been given much publicity. However, to our surprise, we have been inundated with inquiries from all over the world —Japan. Europe, India, and Rhodesia, as well as from all over the United States. These inquiries are from research groups who want to know in more detail how the Philip research developed and how they can train themselves in the psychological skill needed for the production of genuine physical phenomena.

For that is what this book is about — a new development in the wonderful subject of *psychokinesis,* or PK as it is known. The word *psychokinesis* is made up from two Greek words — *psyche,* which means "mind or soul," and *kinesis,* which means "movement." Scientists use the word *psychokinesis* to allude to the fact of a physical object being put into motion without any known physical means being applied and as a result of some

one's mental intention. *Kinesis refer* to the movement of the object and *psyche* to the fact that the happening results from someone mentally intending or willing it to happen.

One type of psychokinesis was demonstrated many years ago by Dr. Joseph B Rhine in his laboratory at Duke University, when he showed that people could exert an effect on the fall of dice by willing them to come down with a particular side uppermost. More recently, movies have been shown in North America in which a Russian woman, Madame Mikhailova. Can, by mental concentration only, cause small objects such as cigarette lighters, matchboxes, and pencils to slide around on the surface of a fable.

Not long ago we ourselves, m the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, made many observations of psychokinesis done by a young Canadian named Jan Merta. He was able to control the motion of a mobile hung up on a thread inside an airtight jar. He could make the mobile start rotating from a state of rest, swing through a specified angle, stop on demand, and reverse or continue its motion as directed. While carrying out this psychokinesis, Mr. Merta put himself deliberately into a relaxed state of mind in which he would "intend" the stopping or starting of the feather without strongly willing it to happen. Thus, to employ a phrase which occurs later in this book, Jan Merta had developed a special psychological skill for the practice of psychokinesis.

Recently psychokinesis has come into prominence in connection with the metal-bending phenomenon demonstrated by Uri Geller and Matthew Manning and by June Charltan and many young people in England and Japan. Despite some minor controversy about Uri Geller (which seems to have been inspired entirely by the professional jealousy of stage magicians), the result of metal bending “breaking out all over” and being witnessed by so many excellent witnesses and being filmed and videotaped *ad libitum.,* has been to establish, once and for all, the abundant reality of psychokinesis as a scientific fact.

This is tremendously exciting, is it shows that the human mind is an even more wonderful thing than was previously suspected. It proves also that there are other physical forces in the universe besides the ones known to science — electricity, magnetism, and the two kinds of nuclear force that hold atoms together. Strangest of all is the fact that mental intention can, by itself, bring these forces into play. But, exciting as this knowledge is, it leaves many questions unanswered.

The first question is whether all the practitioners of psychokinesis that I have mentioned — Jan Mena, Madame Mikhailova, Matthew Manning, Uri Geller, and the metal benders, only have this ability because they are very special people whom no ordinary person can hope to imitate even in a small way. In other words, can one hope to perform PK only if one is of a special breed, someone endowed with a particular kind of innate genius? This is a serious question because the people 1 have mentioned, especially Madame Mikhailova and Matthew Manning, had an early history of being centers of what are called poltergeist phenomena or "recurring spontaneous psychokinesis." These are situations in which strange events take place, apparently without rhyme or reason, in the presence of the person concerned. Thus, in Madame Mikhailova s presence, domestic objects would actually move around; plates would leap from the kitchen shelves. These episodes would occur erratically, according to no fixed schedule. In medieval Europe occurrences of this son would be blamed on "poltergeists" or "noisy spirits," thought of as akin to elves or goblins — the little nature spirits of folklore. This is why the term "poltergeist" is still used, although most of the scientists who study this kind of happening do not think of it as caused by poltergeists or spirits but as a form of psychokinesis.

Usually when people such as Madame Mikhailova are the center of "poltergeist" phenomena, it seems that the events arc caused by some force that originates in them, albeit in some mysterious fashion that we do not yet understand. How

ever, at the outlet at least, it seems that the person concerned does not have the force under his conscious or voluntary control. That 11. the psychokinesis is involuntary It therefore an immensely intriguing question whether the person concerned can develop a conscious control of the psychokinetic ability so as to bring it into play whenever he wishes and only then.

Madame Mikhailova's phenomena were studied by the Great Russian physiologist. Professor Leonid Vasilyev, who asked precisely this question, and suggested to her that she try to train herself to use her PK ability in a consciously controlled way, in which venture, in fact, she succeeded. Another poltergeist person who has brought his psychokinesis under a high degree of conscious control is Matthew Manning, who describes how he did so in his book *The Lank* (1974).

It has been shown therefore that some people are naturally endowed with psychokinetic power and can often bring it under their voluntary mental control. Bur the question still remains, do ordinary people have the PK power also, but in a rudimentary form so that it is too feeble to manifest itself? Alternatively, do ordinary people have the power, but only latently or potentially? If so, is there a special form of training through which they can learn to operate this ability?

Now there is some evidence that many ordinary people do m fact have this power, but it only manifests itself very occasionally. Many people will, if their memory is appropriately logged, recall some forgotten episode which at the time it happened had totally mystified them. It may have involved a picture which leaped off its hook, or a domestic object which suddenly moved in their presence. Very commonly a brief outbreak of a rapping noise is heard. People who have experienced an episode of this kind often puzzle about it for years, because, unless they have studied the subject, they do not know that it was an example of involuntary psychokinesis.

But these episodes are rare Scientists such as me and Dr. Joel Whitton who have studied spontaneous psychokinesis

think that for it to take place there has to be a psychological factor, which seems usually to be an clement of anxiety or nervous tension. This raises the question whether or not the key to evoking the PK ability in an ordinary person is not a matter of an appropriate type of psychological training

There is another obvious question. No one alone can lift a weight of several hundred pounds, but six people together can — Portage by Committee." Why not "Psychokinesis by Committee?" And that is what this book is about — "PK by Committee. If six or eight ordinary people each have rudimentary PK ability, can they, by working together, add up their separate contributions of PK force so as io manifest a physical effect?

This train of thought leads us to consider an area in which PK phenomena and spiritualism overlap — the physical phenomena in the séance room. Over the last hundred years or so, there have been many groups of people who meet regularly to sit in what are called mediumistic circles. This is done in the hope of receiving messages from the spirits of deceased friends and relatives. In a typical sitting or séance the participants arc seated with their hands on top of a table, sometimes with their fingers touching, sometimes not. It is said that the spirit who is supposed to be present often causes a variety of strange physical effects to occur: the table may rock or even be lifted up from the floor, rapping noises may come from the table or elsewhere in other objects in the room may move, even ones as substantial as chairs and other heavy furniture.

In the old days there was serious doubt as to whether these phenomena were genuine. This was because it was believed for them to occur a specially endowed person known as a spirit medium was required. It was also easy to cheat, because it was believed that the sidings or séances had to be in darkness or in subdued light. However, not all mediums appear to have been fraudulent or to have worked in darkness. Research by Sir William Crookes, who worked with the fa-

mous medium D. D. Home in a good light, and by Harry Price and other famous investigators who studied Stella Crenshaw in 1925, proved that some of these physical phenomena were genuine and not the result of trickery

In 1973, a group consisting of eight members of the Society of Psychical Research in Toronto decided to find out more about these mysterious effects. They wanted to find out, first, whether they could be produced in full light; second, whether a spirit medium was necessary or if, first they could be generated by ordinary people; and third, if the force involved was produced by a disembodied spirit or instead was generated by the living panic pants in the circle. The group was an ordinary cross-section of the population: an accountant, an engineer, an industrial designer, a scientific research assistant, and four housewives. None of them claims to be a medium. Psychical research is just one of their many interests.

Their work had started as early as the fall of 1972. For a year they met weekly for a couple of hours, in a sustained attempt to summon up an apparition or ghost. Perhaps when it came it might be merely a collective hallucination, but for all they knew to the contrary, it might come as a materialized figure of 'ectoplasm," or of astral material of pure mental energy, if such things do exist. The point is that though by nature they were all skeptical and scientific, they were also truly open-minded. One could say that the group's point of view was that one cannot absolutely deny the existence of phenomena that one has not taken the trouble to look for. So that their effort would not be aimless and uncoordinated, they did not sit around in the casual hope that any passing spirit (if such there be) would choose to drop in on them. Instead, they decided to concentrate their thoughts as a group on a single character. Philip.

It was essential to their purpose that Philip be a totally fictitious character. Not merely a figment of the imagination but clearly and obviously so, with a biography full of historical errors.

This book sells how the group succeeded in producing abundant PK phenomena— regularly reproducible, seen repeatedly by innumerable witnesses, and recorded in full light many times on film, videotape, and audiotape.

The book also discusses a host of interesting questions which arise from this research: what light does it cast on (he origin of "ghosts" and the haunted-house phenomena? What roles do humor and drama play in developing the necessary psychological skill for group PK? What is the psychological significance of Philip—the imaginary personality—for the group individually or collectively? Does group psychokinesis have an application to group therapy or to the functioning of "healing circles?"

A question which will greatly intrigue some readers is what the Philip research signifies for spiritualism. On the one hand, our discoveries show that one can no longer say, as many people do, that the physical phenomena of the stance room are always fraudulent, because they may, for all we know to the contrary, be genuine PK effects. On the other hand, we cannot be sure that they are due to a spirit, because they may be *merely* PK effects, and the "communicator" allegedly present may be purely imaginary like Philip. No doubt there will be a good deal of controversy about this problem, which is considered in the book, though without claiming to discuss it comprehensively.

For this and other reasons the saga of Philip, the imaginary ghost, is intriguing and entertaining. Bui it is also a scientific document of paramount importance. It is concerned with the real but mysterious force that, whenever the group of eight are together and address themselves to Philip, rocks the table and gives answering raps — raps which arc real physical sounds easily recorded on audiotape. The problem of understanding this force is, in my opinion, as formidable a challenge as modern physicists are likely to encounter. The discovery in so many forms of the PK force (from Philip to metal bending) is possibly the most important scientific development of

the latter part of the twentieth century.

Equally, the psychology of group situations in which this force manifests itself is a problem of great depth, and to solve it would be a contribution to human knowledge just as rewarding as the elucidation of the physical problem

Perhaps the most important feature of this book is the fact that it specifies a method by which the physical PK force can be generated by ordinary people and thus made available for study. The group of eight arc therefore proud of their achievement. as indeed they are entitled to be. However, the group would be the first to insist that what they have done is merely to carry on to a further stage of development the brilliant research work of two investigators. Kenneth Batcheldor and Colin Brookes-Smith. both of whom (very appropriately) are English, and therefore compatriots of Philip.

As the reader will find, those in the group are happy to acknowledge their enormous indebtedness to Batcheldor and Brookes-Smith. not only for the experimental methods devised by these distinguished researchers, but for the very detailed and helpful descriptions which they published concerning their approach to the problem of physical phenomena and the results to which it led.

A. R. G. Owen

Conjuring up Philip

AN ADVENTURE IN PSYCHOKINESIS

1.
The Purpose of the Experiment

The Toronto Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1970, and includes in its membership people from various walks of life. The purpose of the society, which is affiliated with organizations dedicated to the same purposes in England, the United States, and in a number of other places in the world, is to pursue the study of strange and little-known areas of human experience and knowledge This new science, dedicated to undertaking such studies, is known as parapsychology. Although paranormal human experiences have been known for centuries, and there are numerous historical records of such experiences and phenomena, it was not until this century that Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University, North Carolina, by means of a number of controlled experiments in human telepathy, succeeded in making parapsychological studies acceptable to the scientific establishment.

The range of parapsychological studies is immense, since it involves the conclusions of many other disciplines — physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, medicine, psychiatry, philosophy, and religion. The parapsychologist's chief interest is in those areas of paranormal experience which can be investigated scientifically and by methods of controlled experiment.

The study of parapsychology embraces investigation of many little-known areas of human experience, including such phenomena as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, dowsing,

faith healing, auras, reincarnation, and last, but by no means least — ghosts. Controlled experiments, in creating some of these phenomena, are extremely difficult owing to the fact that much of what is known as spontaneous psychical experience (also called "psi") is seldom able to be produced under controlled conditions, and is usually unpredictable and unrepeatable.

This makes parapsychological studies not only challenging but m many ways frustrating. The data which parapsychologists study involve the researcher in many scientific and creative disciplines; it is a held riddled with superstitions, full of misconceptions, overloaded with the prejudices of those who refuse to believe anything that their hands cannot touch or their minds cannot conceive. For this reason, parapsychologists are wedded to the scientific method and are suspicious of fraud.

The Toronto Society for Psychical Research is a privately run association, organized on a voluntary bases; the only criterion for membership is that anyone wishing to join must have an open mind on the various aspects of parapsychological research, a desire to further knowledge in the field, and want to find answers to some of the puzzling questions associated with the study of the subject. The society itself does not have fixed views on any aspect of the subject, although after careful and proper research, pronouncements may be made as to belief or disbelief in any specific phenomenon. Nevertheless, belief in any particular phenomenon, or holding any religious belief, is not a bar to membership, providing the prospective member generally has an open mind on the subject of parapsychology and is prepared to widen or change his views if experience dictates. The society exists primarily to do research and to further the knowledge of its members.

What is a ghost? This question arose during a discussion one night about the nature of ghosts and apparitions. The society has a ghost-hunting' group, which functions as an investigating team when, as often happens, someone calls or

writes to report that they have a "haunting." This type of disturbance can be *very* alarming, and people or families who are haunted" not only react very strongly to the phenomenon, but are anxious to do everything possible to get rid of the disturbance and return to normal living. The "ghost- hunting group has investigated several such disturbances and has often been of some help. But, of course, most parapsychologists are still, themselves, in a learning process because much remains to be known about "ghosts" and "hauntings."

A haunting usually manifests certain types of phenomena; as a general rule people living in the house will hear unexplained noises, footsteps, bangings, knockings, doors opening and closing. Sometimes something is seen, or the occupants of the house will feel that someone is present; occasionally unusual smells are experienced. As the haunting! build up," these events occur more frequently and become increasingly disturbing. Often at this time people living in the house, or experiencing the disturbances, will cast around for a reason for the events and decide that the phenomena are caused by a ghost of a person who was previously an occupant of the house. It is usually possible to find someone on whom to pin the blame — some previous occupant who has died in tragic circumstances, or around whom some dramatic event has centered.

Sometimes, in such circumstances, the next thing that happens is that the "ghost" of that person is seen by one or more members of the household and the haunting becomes complete. At this stage our ghost-hunting" team, if we are asked to help, visits the home and toes to unravel the chain of events in the story and to recommend a course of action to the unhappy occupants. An account of one such event is related in the first issue of our *New Horizons* journal, Summer 1972, and it was, after the investigation of a particular house that the discussion leading to the invention of "Philip" took place.

Having been involved in parapsychological research for

some time, moil of our members were willing to concede that there is such an experience as seeing, hearing, or feeling "a ghost." Seeing or hearing "a ghost" is not always either a deliberate fraud or an imagined event. Most reliable people who report seeing a ghost do actually have an experience but, what does he or she see? What is actually experienced? Is a ghost, as so many people believe, the spirit or astral body of a dead person? Or is it an hallucination — a very vivid form of mental image that appears as real to the percipient as any other object in the vicinity? If it is only an hallucination, why are some ghosts seen by many people, in some cases, over many generations? Even more puzzling is the ghost that is seen simultaneously by a number of people. Are they sharing the same menu! image? And if so, what is the explanation?

These and many other questions were discussed by our group at the Toronto Society for Psychical Research following our ghost-hunting expedition. Reason seems to be in favor of the hallucination theory. Even the trivia, but in some sense very significant trivia, seem to favor the hallucination theory. For instance, it is difficult to believe that one's great Aunt Fanny, if roving around on "the other side," will be clothed in anything but the familiar dresses, the well-known jewelry, the old-fashioned black dress with the high lace collar in which we knew her in life. In our long discussion of this topic, on the night m question, a majority opinion seemed to favor the theory that the answer must be found "in the eye of the beholder."

What is a collective hallucination? A few years ago most people not engaged in parapsychological studies found it difficult to believe in the reality of telepathy — the ability of one person to receive the thoughts of another without any obvious or visible communication. In recent years, following the stimulation Dr. J. B. Rhine gave to this particular area of parapsychology, the climate of opinion in this field has altered. Most people now concede that not only is telepathy possible,

but that it does in fact occur much more frequently than most people realize.

We in the New Horizons Research Foundation have done many controlled expert menu in this field, some of (he results of which are published in New *Horizon)* One of the most interesting results of our experiments was the work done by Dr. D. H. Lloyd (reported in Vol. 1. No. 2). which showed that by projecting a thought or a mental image at a person, it was possible to evoke an electrical response in that person s brain. The evoked response was detected in the cerebral cortex, the gray matter" constituting the surface of the cerebral hemispheres of the brain. The method of detection is very similar to that used to detect the response evoked by ordinary sensory stimulus, such as light directed to the eyes or a noise presented to the ears. Dr. Lloyd's experiment utilizes a technique which has been used and understood for many yean, so that its validity is not m dispute.

Telepathy seems to rake place, and to exist between ordinary people who make no claim to psychic ability, and even at times between people who seem to have no awareness that it is happening. If this is true, and experiments seem to show that it is. then the collective hallucination theory of ghost sightings seems tenable. Just as in a group situation one can produce telepathy, could it not happen that if a group of people had a mutual rapport they might see a ghost together as a group? Could one, in fact, create one's own ghost deliberately in the form of a shared hallucination? Ways were discussed by our group which might lead to the production of our own “shared” hallucination.

The next question to solve, in light of previous thinking was, how could it be proved? Suppose the group succeeded in seeing a ghost; that what they were seeing was in actual fact an hallucination, a creation of their own minds, and not a "disembodied spirit" or the conventional ghost. In other words, what their experiment was designed to accomplish was

to produce a ghost, and one that could be proven to exist — beyond any reasonable doubt — as their own "manufactured" ghost.

The first decision was that they would have to invent their own ghost. What was this to be? An historical figure or a storybook personality would not do. It would have to be a completely new and invented character. Somebody whom every member of the experimenting group *knew* had never existed in real life.

It was in this manner, and after this kind of discussion, that Philip, the imaginary ghost, was invented.

In the next chapter we shall try to describe for the reader the nature of the experiment devised, the participants in the experiment and their backgrounds, the original story of Philip. which was invented, and the initiation of the experiment

2.
The Participants in the Experiment

The initial difficulties in planning the experiment were due to two factors The first was that the experiments in telepathy undertaken thus far within the society had been fairly simple ones, including at least one psychic person, that is someone who claimed already to have had telepathic abilities. It was felt that with Philip, if the experiment was to be a viable one, it should be carried out by a group of people who did not claim psychic or mediumistic ability, and that it would be unwise to invite any person who claimed "psychic" powers to join them. Thu other problem area was, once a ghost character had been invented, how was one to create a group situation in which an hallucination, or an effect, or phenomenon, could materialize?

There are, in existence today, a number of persons and organizations which undertake to teach people how to use their ESP, how to create group thoughts, how to meditate, how to use self-hypnotism or group hypnotism, in order to develop one's psychic powders. The theory behind such efforts is to still the conscious mind so that the energies or powers within the subconscious mind are released; to leave the mind free to allow other than the normal stimuli to enter. Some of these organizations base their teaching on such facts as are already known about these techniques, but others, unfortunately, are attempting to cash in on the desire so many people

have, to get involved in paranormal experiences, often with- out any real knowledge of the factors involved.

We decided that the members of the group we would use should never have made any claim to having had psychic experience, and that our experiment should be, so far as was possible, a controlled scientific one. The total experiment would be conducted at sittings in sufficient light for visual recording. If we produced anything, whether visual or auditory, we would want it to be visible enough to be seen by other people, even photographed, and certainly to be recorded.

Perhaps this needs further elaboration. We were aware that there would be two possible types of hallucination or projection The first, more logical, would be subjective in nature. the result of shared telepathic communication which would be perceived only by the people in the group undertaking the experiment. In fact one of the purposes of the experiment, which was very' successfully fulfilled (witness the descriptions of each member of the group in Chapter 16, *after* the experiment was over), was the hope that each member of the group would benefit from the experiment by having been trained in telepathic techniques, as well as from a kind of sensitivity group therapy.

What the group was hoping for, since we undertook some studies in this field, was the possibility of the production of thought-forms, even the rarer possibility of the production of a tangible ''ghost'' which could be seen by people other than the group, who would be witnesses Perhaps such a projection might even be photographed. We were, in fact, prepared for anything, hut what actually happened was, in many ways, even more interesting. Anyway, we provided recording equipment.

Initially twelve or fourteen people were prepared to be involved in the experiment, but we realized that a smaller number, six or eight people, would be more effective. However, it was decided, finally, that the experiment should start with the larger number of people, as it was likely that some of the members would drop out in the initial stages. It was

agreed that the group should meet once a week, on a specific day each week, and that we should he prepared to give the experiment a year to produce some results We discovered from the experience of other groups undertaking other experiments in group rapport, that it would take some time. It was also decided, ahead of lime, that if any member of the group should feel incompatible cither with the group or with any individual member of the group, he or she would grace- fully withdraw It is absolutely necessary in group rapport work that each member of the group should feel at ease with every other member, or results would not be produced.

With these safeguards successfully built into our plans, and having decided on the method of approach to the experiment, we had to invent the character whom we hoped to "summon up.** The task of inventing our ghost fell to Margaret (Sue) Sparrow, and the group is indebted to her for the original invention of the story. Before outlining this story it might be well to introduce the reader to the members of the final group who undertook the experiment. For the sake of convenience and anonymity, these people are called only by their first names, but of course full records are available to anyone who is professionally interested in knowing the full name of each of the participants. One of the reasons for anonymity at this stage is that the group regards this as an ongoing experiment and hopes to continue the experiment in the future.

The members of the group:

1. Al is a man of practical ability and common sense He is a fully qualified heating engineer and runs his own business. His hobbies are scouting, to which he devotes much of his spare time, and photography.
2. Lome is an industrial designer, a very creative and artistic person. His hobbies are unusual and include the Japanese an of *tuibido,* sword fighting. He is an authority on old maps and on ancient history in general and is a student of Oriental philosophies. He is also an astronomer.

3. Andy is Lome's wife. If asked, she would probably describe herself as a housewife She is, however, more than this; she is artistic, and it was she who drew the pictures of Philip. She has an exquisite eye for color and is well read. She and her husband belong to the Royal Astronomical Society. They have a telescope in their home. Andy also loves animals, especially cats, with whom she has a great rapport.

4 Bernice is a fully qualified and efficient accountant, but like Andy, she also has an artistic flair for color and clothes. She is widely read, is interested in philosophy, and ponders much on the meanings of things. She has a good sense of humor and enjoys the out-of-doors.

5 Dorothy is another member of the group who, if asked to describe herself, would probably say she is a housewife. Blonde and vivacious, her hobbies consist chiefly of scouting. She has been a cub leader for a number of years and enters enthusiastically into all her endeavors. Dorothy has been interested in parapsychology for a number of years and is well read in this subject as well as in many others. She is also trained in bookkeeping and accounting.

6. Sidney is the youngest member of the group. He is still in college but took time off for some travel and worked for a while as a salesman. He intends to return to college and complete his course in sociology. He is tall and broad, with blue eyes and fair hair, and is teased a lot by the group, who is very' fond of him. 1 le has recently grown a beard.

7. Sue, who originated the Philip story for this book, is married and is the mother of three boys. She is currently Chairman of Mensa for Canada. This is the organization for people with a high I.Q.; they are dedicated to the task of using their special abilities to help solve some of the major problems that beset mankind. She has many

diversified interests. Before her marriage she WAS a nurse with the Canadian armed forces. She has both a vivid imagination and a gift for drama

8. Iris, the author and oldest member of the group, has been interested in paranormal experiences, especially that of poltergeist events, for about twenty years. She is the wife of Dr. A. R. G. Owen, the Director of The New Horizons Research Foundation, who supervised the Philip experiment. Since coming to Canada. Iris has worked full time with her husband George, acting both as his personal secretary* and as secretary of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research. Before her marriage she was a registered nurse in England and spent some years working in a clinic devoted to the treatment and research of cancer. As a volunteer, she acquired a great deal of experience in social work, being especially involved in problems connected with the care of children. Iris was a county councilor in England and at various times sat on the board of governors of five schools. She was also a member of children's committees, adoption commit- tees, and chairman of the governors of an approved school for delinquent boys. Since coming to Canada she has been a field research worker for a report on child abuse in Ontario, compiled for the Provincial Government Iris is currently personnel chairman for the board of a home for unwed mothers. She is also very actively involved in women's work in the United Church of Canada.

Ins writes as follows:

"I have been personally involved and interested in poltergeist phenomena for almost twenty years. My husband had decided to study these strange events and write what was meant to be a literary review of the literature on the subject However we became personally involved in the events happening around Virginia Campbell, a little Scottish girl: these were described in the book On

We *Explain the Poltergeist* under the heading "'the Sauchie Poltergeist." I found my interest was aroused and I have continued to share my husband's interest and involvement ever since

"1 have spent the years following the Sauchie story sharing my husband's interest in parapsychological research, and I have been particularly interested in the production of physical phenomena. Most researchers a r e frustrated by the fact that poltergeist events seem to happen completely at random, and that one does not usually hear of a poltergeist outbreak until it is largely over. The descriptions given are often confused by suggestions that discarnate spirits, or the devil, are responsible. The person around whom the events center may, by that time, have resorted to mild trickery because he or she has no actual control over the production of phenomena, Visitors, family, and reporters from the media, having gathered in the hope of witnessing dramatic events, the person concerned (often a child or adolescent) feels somehow obliged to repay them for the trouble they have taken in coming Even in Virginia Campbell's case, where tremendous efforts were made by family, friends, and advisers to keep down publicity, the child was swamped by curiosity seekers and reporters whenever she went out After the main phenomena had died away (as they nearly always do after a period of a few weeks), there were some strange extra occurrences which did not seem to fit in with the usual pattern of behavior of a poltergeist, and which may have been due to a desire, conscious or unconscious on Virginia's part (or on the part of the two other children in the house) to keep the "pot boiling." so to speak

"Obviously the ideal situation would he to have a poltergeist occurrence in a laboratory situation, where experiments can be done and precautions can be taken against fraud. In a controlled situation there is plenty of

opportunity for the scientist and researcher to come 10 grips with this strange force that seems as if it might be the transformation of a thought (conscious or unconscious) into an actual physical force that can he heard and seen at work

Attempts have been made at substantiating this hypothesis and William G. Roll of Durham University (North Carolina) has written of experiments carried out with a young man from Miami, around whom glass and china objects used to fly from shelves. As he worked in a gift shop, this proved somewhat of a liability, and his employers were not happy with the situation at all. Mr. Roll managed to get him into a laboratory situation where the young man was able to order selected objects to move from shelves at will, thus demonstrating that he had some degree of control over the movements of the objects (Roll, 1972). From time to time other poltergeist mediums have discovered this only toward the end of their manifestations. I seem to remember Virginia Camp- bell on one occasion ordering an apple to come from a bowl toward her, which it did. She stretched out her hand and took it and ate it, as if it were quite a natural thing.

An English schoolboy. Matthew Manning, around whom many dramatic and spectacular poltergeist activities took place, also had some degree of control over the power (Manning, 1974). The Manning family related to me how, on one occasion, as they were sitting at Sunday lunch, Matthew s younger sister and brother were teasing him about his poltergeist ability and his claim to have discovered that he could, in some degree, control the force. "Do something now," one of them said. "All right" said Matthew, "What would you like me to do?" "Move my wardrobe." said one. "Turn my bed over" said the other. Matthew concentrated for a moment and then announced that he had indeed done those things. The father insisted the family finish their meal, and then

they all trooped upstairs to find that the designated bed and wardrobe had been moved as directed. This of course was not a controlled experiment. We have only the family's word for it, but the whole family was unanimous about their version of the event.

"A skeptical experimenter might say the younger children could have moved the furniture first — but they were only about nine and eleven yean old at the time, and could hardly have done this in the middle of the day without making some noise The strongest argument against trickery is, of course, the honesty of the family members themselves. We believe scientists and others, if they are people of good reputation, and have no ax to grind. Why should we not believe what people tell us they have seen and experienced in this field? The family in the Manning case is of high repute. The father is a professional man of standing and ability in his profession the family is well regarded in their community. What happened to them was acutely embarrassing, and for a long time the family tried to shut their eyes to the experience and hoped it would go away When they eventually had to seek help, because they could not cope, they did so discreetly, going to people whom they believed could help deal with the matter, avoiding publicity for as long as possible Unfortunately, one cannot easily keep these things secret — the younger children were upset and ex- cited, events had occurred at Matthew s boarding school, and it was almost impossible to prevent people from being aware of what was happening.

When the Philip manifestations occurred, as they did eventually— *not* in an existing poltergeist situation, but with a group of perfectly ordinary people, no one of whom claimed to have any psychic gifts—producing phenomena almost to order, in full light and in the sight of all, and later under the blazing lights of film and television cameras, you can imagine how delighted I was. We

had at last carried out a completely repeatable para psychological experiment in a laboratory situation, I look forward, in the months to come, to doing a number of further experiments, so that one day we may discover the nature of this strange force or energy."

The members of the group who conducted the Philip" experiment, having decided upon the general approach to the experiment, delegated the task of inventing our imaginary ghost Philip to Sue, to whom credit must be given for the following story of "Philip "

Philip was an aristocratic Englishman living in the middle 1600s at the lime of Oliver Cromwell. He had been a supporter of the king and was a Catholic. He was married to a beautiful but cold and frigid wife, Dorothea, the daughter of a neighboring nobleman. One day, when out riding on the boundaries of his estates, Philip came across a gypsy encampment and saw there a beautiful dark eyed, raven-haired gypsy girl, Margo, and fell instantly in love with her

He brought her back secretly to live in the gate house near the stables of Diddington Manor—his family home. For some time he kept his love nest secret, but eventually Dorothea, realizing he was keeping someone else there, found Margo, and accused her of witchcraft and of stealing her husband. Philip was too scared of losing his reputation and his possessions to protest at the trial of Margo, and she was convicted of witchcraft and burned at the stake. Philip subsequently was stricken with remorse that he had not tried to defend Margo and use to pace the battlements of Diddington in despair. Finally one morning his body was found at the foot of the battlements where he had cast himself in a fit of agony and remorse

The first thing that the group was asked to do was to familiarize themselves with (he Philip story In order to do this, each one of the group was urged to memorize and make

real to themselves, as much as they could of the story, of the people in it, and especially to try to *set* Philip as a person who had existed. To help each member of the group do this, many of the sessions at first consisted of a free and easy dialogue among the members of the group, who made suggestions, asked questions, and filled out the story with as much detail as possible, so that everyone could have the same clear picture of Philip, and of his tragic story. The reader must keep in mind the original purpose of the experiment, which was to see if a collective hallucination could be produced. It was decided that Philip had been reincarnated several times, and that once every* century or so his ghost as Philip is seen on the battlement's of Diddington. It was decided by the group that the year 1972 was such a year, and that die ghost then reappeared

It should be emphasized that although there is a real place in Warwickshire, England, called Diddington Hall, there are features in the architecture of the imaginary Diddington Man-or (such as a tower and battlements) that the actual place does not nor ever did possess. Neither does the real history of Diddington bear any relationship to that related in the story of Philip, who as an historical character never existed. Never- the less, he bears sufficient resemblance to a traditional historical apparition, with his story of drama and tragedy, to be ''believable" as a ghost of that period. The choice of a real location, as opposed to an imaginary one, was made because it was felt that it would be easier for the group to concentrate on a real home and countryside.

The author of the Philip story was herself familiar with Diddington Hall, having lived there for a while during a period immediately after her marriage in I960. At a later stage in the experiment two other members of the group visited England and brought back photographs of the house and sur- rounding countryside. These were placed around the room in which the group met, serving as one of the focal points for concentrating on Philip and lending his story a certain authenticity.

The members of the group were hippy with the story of Philip" as the subject of the experiment, and it was decided to attempt to create him as a visible form — a collective hallucination. It was felt that only if he became a viable, real personality in their own minds, could he be "summoned up" Consequently, everyone discussed the story at length, including details of Philip I character and personality! until they were all familiar with his background. They agreed upon his physical characteristics, the color of his eyes and hair, his height, his temperament, his likes and dislikes, the kind of things he would do. his attire, the sort of food he would eat. and especially his feelings toward Dorothea and Margo, until they had created a complete mental picture of him to which they could all subscribe. To fix the picture more firmly, Andy, the artistic member of the group, drew a picture of Philip. In addition, the group read books relating to Philip' s times, found records and songs of the period, and generally familiarized themselves with the sort of environment in which he would have lived.

The experiment started by the group using the meditation methods referred to previously. They would sit in a circle, sometimes around a table. In the middle of the circle they would put the picture of Philip, and if they were not using a table they would put a piece of aluminized cardboard on the floor, with the hope and expectation that Philip might materialize in the middle of that. (In reports of séances it is said that often an apparition materializes from the middle of a circle in this manner).

The group never sat in darkness, although from time to time different colored lights were used, and sometimes just candle- light. After a period of quiet meditation, they would then relax and exchange views on what they fell or experienced during mediation Then they would have a second period of meditation. Usually only two sessions of meditation were held in s single evening, but the length of these gradually increased as the group became more accustomed in meditation. Many

of the members had not used meditation methods prior to this experiment During the period of relaxation they would discuss Philip, his story and times, and during this period Philip s story and details concerning his personality were added to the original version.

Philip quickly began to acquire a real personality in the minds of the group members. Following each period of meditation a dialogue such as this would follow. One member would say, for instance:

"I wonder what color Philip's eyes are I think they are blue The others agreed that they also visualized them as blue. "He must have been very unhappy with Dorothea, she was such a cold character another member would add "He probably was forced to marry her. I wonder why?" ' The family estates were side by side."

Perhaps he needed the money she brought him as a dowry."

'Maybe his father persuaded him to increase the value of the lands

"I wonder if he went to court a lot and saw the king." "Did he fight in the Civil War?"

"I wonder which battles he fought in."

"There was a lot of smallpox in London and in the countryside at that time."

"There was also an outbreak of the plague." "I wonder what his religion was."

These and many other remarks, questions, and answers, were voiced during the relaxing sessions between periods of meditation Most of the questions were answered at the time, and in this way the group created their own ideas of what kind of a person Philip should be. Not all the questions chat were asked about Philip were always answered at each session, but most of them were. Eventually a very complete and rounded image of what Philip must be like was formed in the minds of the group as a whole. Not only had Philip himself become

more "real" to them, but also the figures of Dorothea. Margo, King Charles, Philip's parents, and Dorothea's parents had been brought to life and took their places in the whole picture. The story had become so familiar to them that the group members were beginning to find it more difficult to believe that Philip had never existed.

As the meditation techniques grew more concern rated, some individual members of the group seemed to find difficulty in realizing that Philip was not actually present, and some were unconsciously claiming him for their own, stating that during meditation Philip had said this or that to them or that they had "seen" him in a particular and special circumstance. It was emphasized strongly to the group at this stage that Philip had to be a *group* experience If he appeared at all, it would have to be to everybody at once. To be credible from the point of view of the experiment, he must appear in the middle of the circle and not just to any one person It was very important to prevent any possible fragmentation, so to speak, of the proposed collective hallucination. The group had to be re- minded that Philip belonged to the group's subconscious, and that if he appeared, he must appear in the same way and to everyone at once.

This was felt to be especially important, because the group was aware that in spiritualistic circles when an entity or apparition appears, it is assumed to be due to the presence of a "medium" or to some specially gifted psychic person who has the power to "call up entities. The whole object of our experiment was to prove that no such person was necessary. Our objective was to be able to prove that it was something any group of ordinary people could do We felt also that if the responsibility for the success of the experiment became delegated to any one person, the enthusiasm, and possibly his or her abilities, as well as the enthusiasm of the other members of the group might diminish, and ultimately the experiment might fail.

During (his initial period, as we had expected some of

the original participants in the experiment dropped out for various reasons. We were left with a nucleus of the eight persons whom we have described, five women and three men. This group stayed together during the whole experiment and is still operating as an experimental group as at this writing

The initial period of the experiment described here consisted almost entirely of meditation sessions, during which the group trained themselves to concentrate upon Philip's materializing. An observer (not always the same person) was placed outside of the actual group, someone who had had experience in seeing auras, in order to report any unusual happenings that might occur and that might not be visible or apparent to any member of the group sitting within the circle.

Some of the members chose to meditate with (their eyes shut, and so an outside observer was regarded as important. One observer reported on several occasions that she saw auras around the heads of those meditating She also observed what she described as energy fields" between various members of the group The group remembers themselves from time to time observed a certain mistiness present around the circle, and at times in the center of the circle At this time no smoking was allowed in the room until after the meditation periods because some members felt that tobacco smoke interfered with their processes of meditation However, apart from these small observations, in spite of very faithful attendance by members of the group, and a very sincere effort to produce some results by this method of meditation, at the end of a full year the group was feeling very discouraged. Nothing of any real value had been obtained. No apparition of any kind had been seen, and it seemed pointless to continue.

3.
A Different Approach-and Philip Responds Unexpectedly

While it was not easy to keep up the early enthusiasm for the experiment in the light of such meager results, the group met to discuss policy and to try to see if they could arrive at some evaluation of the lack of accomplishment during the first year. They remembered their resolution to continue the experiment even if it appeared, as it had done, to be a failure. After all, they reasoned, this was a new type of experiment, and they had had little to guide them as to procedure.

One positive result had been achieved; this was in the relationship that had developed between the members of the group. They were beginning to know each other very well and had established an extremely good rapport among themselves. In fact, a close bond of affection and friendship has grown up among the eight members of the group as a result of working together, and the consequence of this might be a long step forward toward achieving their goal of a group projection, which had not yet occurred. The problem now, was how to make use of this rapport. They were ready, they felt, for a shared experience, but how could this be induced.

It was at this time that Iris, who had been studying literature on the subject of psychodynamics, came across the work of C. Brookes-Smith, D. W. Hunt, and K. J. Batcheldor which had been carried out in England in 1960 and reported in the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* (see Bibliography).

Several researchers had already suggested that the ability to produce psychokinetic phenomena was not a mystical quality possessed only by a number of people called mediums, but rather a skill which could be acquired by almost anyone. The determining factor seemed to be the mental disposition. Doubt and suspicion hinder the production of the phenomenon; belief and expectation heighten it. By practicing trying to relieve tension while simultaneously maintaining an expectant attitude, one can soon succeed in demonstrating PK — this, at least, was the theory.

Several experiments carried out by Batcheldor and his associates, planned along the lines mentioned above, were said to have produced specific physical phenomena such as table rapping and movements of the table, but without any visual appearances of any kind. It was *the method of* producing these phenomena that interested the group most.

Essentially, instead of using the meditation techniques that the group had been practicing for the past year, Batcheldor and his associates recommended trying some of the methods that were used within the séance circles that were so prevalent in Victorian times, and which allegedly had produced some unusual results. In the Victorian séance the participants sat around in a relaxed and jolly atmosphere, singing songs and hymns, making jokes, and carrying on a conversation among themselves.

These séances became very much social occasions. There were, however, features that our group decided to avoid: the sittings were often carried on in a dim light, sometimes even in total darkness; one member of the group was usually regarded as the medium and was made responsible for any phenomena that occurred; the other sitters were said to add their "energy" to his or hers, since there were both male and female mediums.

The happenings that took place at these séances were usually explained by the medium as due to the action of discarnate entities or spirits. These "spirits," as described by the medium

were usually recognizable by the sitters as friends or relatives. As these sittings were usually conducted in dim light, and under conditions which made it difficult to detect fraud, if it were present, the results obtained did not gain the attention of serious researchers There was, of course, a strong desire on the part of the sitters to have contact with their relatives and friends who had "passed over to the other side," and there was also a strong motivation on the part of the medium to produce evidence of the continuing existence of the departed.

Most of these séances were conducted by spiritualist circles, where the emphasis is upon the communication of spirits, through the medium, to the sitters. Other physical phenomena, such as raps, floating trumpets, and table levitations, were regarded merely as evidences of the spirit's presence and as means of communication for the spirit to use, and not of special importance in themselves. Parapsychologists, however, have been interested in the physical phenomena *per se.* As a result of this, in some spiritualistic circles, parapsychologists are regarded with suspicion and are believed only to be present at séances to detect fraud. As a consequence, investigation of these spiritualistic phenomena has been made difficult by bad feelings and lack of cooperation.

In the light of our present knowledge, therefore, parapsychologists feel that they should take a look at what is happening at these séances, perhaps to come up with a better explanation.

The Batcheldor investigators in England were more interested in the physical phenomena that might be produced at a group silting than in any alleged communicator (eg, through a medium) at this stage of their experiments. In fact, Batcheldor's experiment, which was successfully carried out by three men and one woman, was an attempt to make a table weighing eighteen kilos rise from the floor. The hands of the experimenters were, at all limes, *above* the table. The experiment was very successful They heard knockings, and they

produced table movements very early in their experiments, culminating in complete levitation *of* the table at the eleventh sitting. The June 1970 issue of the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* described the Batcheldor experiment as follows:

> Briefly stated the basis of Batcheldor's approach to the problem of psychokinesis is that such paranormal phenomena are forms of unusual human behavior, which are occasionally manifested exosomatically when the conditions are favorable. The ability to produce phenomena is not a mysterious capacity conferred on a few rare individuals called 'mediums' but a *psychological skill* which can be acquired through aptitude and experience by virtually all human beings. Successful induction depends on a combination of a learning process and a serene mental attitude which avoids scepticism Scepticism or disbelief is an inhibitory factor not merely when it is a long-term rejection of all alleged psychical phenomena, but more often as "instant doubt" occurring immediately before a paranormal display. Belief or expectancy, cm the other hand, is an essential factor for success, even if this is also of the "instant" type, not necessarily present before the sitting is underway. Dim lighting or total darkness serve the dual purpose of avoiding witness and ownership inhibition. also of producing a state of heightened belief or expectancy — in effect (Batcheldor's] rules predict chat given patience and persistence, groups sitting for psychokinesis should have no difficulty in producing and repeating various displays of pan normality, providing they go the right way about it.

The group all read this account of the Batcheldor experiment and other experiments of a similar nature which were described in the June 1966 issue of the same journal. Further information, especially on the subject of training oneself psychologically to produce certain types of paranormal phenomena, is to be found in an article written by Colin Brookes-Smith

in the journal for June 1973.

Our group still believed, especially after reading these articles, that they could produce not only the effects produced by the English investigators, but also that they would be able to produce a materialization of their own ghost, Philip. It was decided, therefore, to change the method of approach and to copy at the siftings the methods used by the English group. At this stage our group was still thinking primarily, not of producing raps or movements, but of an actual ghost. They wanted to *see* Philip, and they were only concerned with a visible apparition.

They decided on one or two variations from the English sittings. They had, from the beginning, sat in a fair degree of light. If there was a materialization, they did not want it to be in dim or infrared lighting. For the validity of the experiment they thought that the materialization should occur in a good light, so a panel of colored lights behind a sheet of frosted glass was used. The light could be varied in color and intensity, and often a sitting would start in a soft pink or rosy glow, and the intensity of the light would be gradually increased during the evening. During the early sittings of the subsequent meetings results were obtained, in the full glare of film cameras and television lighting; because results did come.

The new meetings consisted of a period of discussion and study. The group knew each other well now, as has been pointed out, but they had to get used to reproducing the easygoing atmosphere described in the Victorian stances and advocated by the Batcheldor experiment. It was important to try to understand the psychological reasoning behind the advice to use this method. It was equally important, along with an understanding of the reasoning behind the new approach, to accept it and to believe that it was necessary for the production of paranormal occurrences. Paradoxically, when they did succeed, the group did not then, and docs not now, understand how it worked But at the time of undertaking the new

method, they had *to believe* that it would work.

So the new sittings were started.

Having been accustomed to the previous meditative approach, the members of the group found it difficult at first to relax and to keep a normal conversation going, while at the same time concentrating upon the hope of producing Philip. Conversation was apt to be stilled, even though they had all become good friends. Self-consciousness was evident during the singing of songs, and sometimes memory failed here, too. Their knowledge of jokes became suddenly very limited, and the first sitting turned out to be a somewhat "forced" affair. However, after the first two or three weeks, the rapport which the group had built up among themselves started to pay dividends. They found it increasingly easier to relax, to hold light conversation, to tell jokes and sing songs, to recite dramatic poetry, while at the same time thinking about producing the ghost of Philip.

One evening, during the third or fourth new session, the group felt a vibration within the table top, somewhat like a knock or rap. It is correct to say "felt" rather than "heard," because the group was making a degree of noise at the moment so that the unexpected action within the table took them completely by surprise. They were not expecting anything of this nature, so nobody could say for sure whether they *beard* the vibration as a noise, although everybody *felt* the vibration.

As the sitting proceeded other raps came, as if someone had struck the table a light blow. These knocks or raps became louder and louder until there was no doubt but that they were *beard by everyone* in the group. Each one of the group assured himself or herself that nobody was in any way, either deliberately or inadvertently, producing the raps which were proceeding from the top of the table.

This development startled the group. Although they had completely familiarized themselves with the work of the English group of investigators, somehow they had not expected that they would be able to create this type of physical

phenomena themselves. They were too intent on creating their own hallucination. The next thing that happened, to their surprise, was that the table started to slide about the floor. It moved quite rapidly, in random fashion, and without any apparent purpose.

At first there was a tendency for the members to question each other about pushing, even if only involuntarily. This was, however, difficult to believe, as everyone was disciplined to be careful and scientific in his approach Also, this immediate question came to mind. If they were pushing subconsciously now, why had this not occurred during the previous year, when they had been equally anxious to produce an hallucination? During the whole of the year the table had never shown the slightest inclination to produce either rapping or movement. On one or two occasions various members of the group had thought they detected some feeling of warmth or vibration in the table top, but these phenomena seemed so insignificant that they had been discounted. Why then, if the members were responsible, either consciously or unconsciously, did these new definitive effects suddenly take place? There were swift and violent table movements. It quickly became obvious to the satisfaction of all the members in the group that no one person, or the group as a whole, was pushing the table. It was even more obvious that nobody could be fraudulently producing the raps without betraying the fact of his participation. At times the table slid away from their hands so quickly that it was difficult to keep up with it. It would be impossible for anyone to be pushing it without the rest of the group being aware of it.

During these first sittings the group members were somewhat nonplussed. They were not quite sure how to deal with this strange twist to their experiment, although they were aware of the possibility of the manifestation of this type of phenomena. While this speculation was going on aloud about the cause of the table wrappings, Dorothy exclaimed, "I wonder if by chance Philip is doing this?" Immediately there came a

very loud rap from the table top — so Philip had come, though in a different form from that which we had expected.

The group quickly established a code; one rap meant yes, two raps meant no. We decided to adapt ourselves, at least temporarily, to the new situation. We would not lose sight of the fact that our original objective was to produce a visual image of "Philip' — we still wanted to see him. But one should not look a gift horse in the mouth. Here we had produced paranormal phenomena, unusual and remarkable. Here were the physical phenomena of the stance room, but produced in full light, by nonpsychotic or mediumistic people, and without a 'genuine'' spirit communicator. Ours no real" ghost —- he was a complete invention. It would be interesting to learn what he would have to say.

It often happens in the field of parapsychological research, as indeed in other disciplines, that investigators are so intent on their own line of thinking, on the results they are hoping to produce, chat they ignore other profitable and equally interesting side effects that might come their way, In searching through the many detailed accounts of séance-circle sittings, all the emphasis had been placed upon *the alleged communications,* perhaps rather vague and difficult to evaluate; the accompanying phenomena, such as raps, table movements, and direct voice, were ignored. Such an attitude reminds one of the ''shaggy dog" story of the milkman s horse. A man going along the street one day was addressed by a dejected- looking horse, pulling a wagon. 'Say," said the horse, "do you know, only a couple of years ago I won the Grand National, and now look at me, pulling this wagon, and at the beck and call of a little man shouting 'Go' and 'Whoa!' " The bystander, greatly amazed at being addressed by a horse, stopped the milkman as he emerged carrying his bottles from a nearby apartment house. Do you know your horse can talk? He has just told me he won the Grand National, What a remarkable animal'" "Take no notice of him," replied the milkman. "He never won the Grand National; he was thirteenth. He tells

everyone that he came in first."

Many parapsychological investigators in the past have been rather like the milkman. However, our Canadian group decided to pursue the new phenomenon, and put aside for the time being their ambition to create a hallucination of Philip. They continued to question Philip, via the table rapping, about his life story and the times in which he lived.

4.
How the Group helped Philip to tell his Story

The group had the beginning of a code. They established that in their conversations with Philip one rap meant yes and two raps meant no. Of course they could have adopted the well- established procedure used in this type of experiment, of allotting a number to each letter of the alphabet, and asking Philip to spell out his answers to their questions by rapping the requisite number of rimes for each letter, but this method becomes laborious. It was decided to ask only one type of question — one that required a yes or no answer. They decided also to assume, unless it was otherwise made evident, that Philip was the respondent.

It was realized that this system restricted the content of the questions, since Philip would not be able to give any gratuitous information. But it was felt necessary to avoid the tedium and boredom which might follow* as the result of using any other method. At this stage the group was as interested in the actual production of physical phenomena as they were in the content of the replies. As the experiment proceeded, however, this attitude somewhat reversed itself, and the nature of the replies became more important, as we shall see.

The table used was an ordinary' plastic-topped card table, with folding wooden legs, strengthened at the corners by metal stays, The group started each session by silting around this table. Each member would say, in turn, “Hello, Philip." Usually,

without any preamble or warming-up exercise, there would come a rap *under the band of the person speaking.* This was an interesting, indeed significant phenomenon in itself. The raps appeared co move around the table, and to answer the person actually speaking or asking the question. It gave one an uncanny sensation to feel this rap immediately under one's own hand. Increasingly, as the group became more interested in the phenomena and focused interest on the phenomena as they became more accustomed to them, there was no need to perform any warming-up or relaxation exercises, such as singing or joke telling. However, as the experiment went on, it was felt that for good and continuous results the best procedure was to intersperse the questionings with songs, jokes, and conversation. If the questioning became too intense, as Batcheldor stated in his articles, the raps became more feeble, diminishing at times to more of a ''fueling" of vibration; and if persistent questioning continued beyond (his point, the raps might cease altogether. It was discovered that the tension of continual, uninterrupted questioning definitely has an inhibiting effect upon the rapping.

A typical session went something like this: The group entered the room, greeted each other, and sat around the table. In turn, each would say hello to Philip Each member usually got a reply. Sometimes, someone would address the table with a remark such as, "It's nice to be here again, Philip." Or, if someone was late, "So-and-so will be here in a minute, Philip." Frequently a rap would follow such remarks. Then someone might ask, "Is Margo with you?" and an answer would be given to this question — a yes or a no.

Sometimes, when a latecomer entered the room, with the others grouped around the table, the table would rush across the room as if to greet the newcomer. "Here is so-and-so," someone would say, and a loud rap might follow.

The session usually started with general conversation about what various members of the group had been doing that week. If the conversation became sufficiently general for the

member to forget Philip temporarily, a series of attention- getting raps might be heard from (he table. Or the table might decide to start suddenly sliding across the floor. Although the yes-no code had been established by the sitters, the cable seemed at times to develop a subtle ' personality' of its own. For instance, if Philip did not know the answer to a question, there would be several hesitant knocks. If a remark was made which reflected on his wife Dorothea, the most extraordinary scratching sounds were heard from apparently underneath the table top. When a particularly good joke was told, there would be a series of loud raps, giving a kind of rolling effect, almost as if the cable were laughing. During the singing of the groups favorite tunes, in which all members joined, loud raps beating in time to the music would be heard. The group al- ways met in one particular room which was designated as "Philip's room." and not used for any other purpose. It had been agreed that if any kind of manifestation of Philip's presence was obtained, he should be confined to one room. There was a specific reason for all of this. Until it was known in what form his manifestation might occur, it was felt safer to ensure chat this only occurred when the group was together. In Philip's room were kept pictures of his home in England and the surrounding countryside, his own portrait, some fencing foils (he was supposed to love fencing), and various other reminders of the Civil War period in England, including hooks, pictures, documents, records of songs of the time, etc.

Philip had now become a "personality," and he would make his presence known whenever the group that summoned him sat around his cable in his room and said hello. Now that the group had acquired a complete rapport with each other, he never failed to answer either by raps or by table movements.

At this stage everyone was getting immense enjoyment out of the sittings. They were intensely interested in the replies they were receiving from Philip regarding his life story and the happenings of his period in history. Equally fascinating

was the behavior of the table i tie If In addition to sliding across the floor (which incidentally was covered with a thick pile carpet), the table would uh in various ways, lifting one. two, or three legs, and pivot, sometimes almost dancing When it stopped and questions were asked, the answers still came in the form of the now-familiar raps Although everyone was convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena, a strict watch was kept on the sitters to make sure (hat there was neither involuntary rapping or obvious pushing when the table was in motion In order to assure this, the group mem ben would sometimes put shiny paper doilies on the table top. their hands resting on top of these If there was any pressure from the members* hands the doilies would slide across the table, and of course the cable would not move However, in spite of the doilies, the table lifted, gyrated, and danced with as much agility and speed as before, demonstrating to the group's satisfaction that they were not pushing

In the earlier chapters of this book we gave the story of Philip as originally created and presented to the group. The full story of Philip, however, only finally evolved during these initial sittings of table-rapping Perhaps this is the time to re- late the story of Philip as it came to the group as a result of *their questioning.*

For the first few weeks of the new type of sitting, the group had questioned Philip casually and randomly about himself Up until this time they had been more intrigued with the phenomena than with his actual story. They then decided that it would be an interesting experience to spend a whole evening attempting to check Philip's own story with the picture they had of him and also to add any further details he might wish to tell them. In order not to cause any misunderstanding, it should be explained to the reader that although the rest of the story that follows is as it was 'told' to the group through the rapping sessions, it is obviously only an expansion of the original story In other words, everyone realized afterward that the story started with Sue's first, shorter version of

Philip's life and times. The group added to this version during their conversations while the meditation sessions were underway, and finally completed it through their "joint voice," i.e. through the rapping's during the rime of the physical phenomena But, as will be discussed later, any new material that was evoked from Philip during the questioning periods consisted of facts (historical or otherwise) to which the members themselves contributed, or perhaps had mentioned or commented upon during meditation periods. No more questions were asked during this period than those to which the group had first subscribed or had generally agreed should be asked as a group.

By the time these special sessions occurred Philip had become a very real person in the minds of everyone. While the sessions took place it was like having a ninth person sitting around the table and joining in the conversation. It was as if the group was discussing a real person. For instance, Al asked, "What were the names of the political parties in Philips time?"

One of the others answered, "They were divided into Tories, the king's parry, and the followers of Cromwell, who were the Puritans."

"Philip would have been a Tory then. Are you a Tory, Philip?"

(Rap) "Yes."

Much of Philip's story evolved in this way, and of course it was inevitable that a number of questions were asked which had not been discussed previously by the members as a group. To each question Philip answered the person asking the question, and in each case his answers were what that person would have expected. If there was a doubt in the mind of the person questioning, the knocks were often hesitant. On one occasion, when the questioning took a trend in which the answer to the question could have been ambivalent, there were quite violent scratching sounds, as if Philip himself was registering disapproval. Some of the questions asked about Philip's love life,

one for example asking him if Dorothea was reluctant to hear children, and loud scratchings were heard, and the raps ceased

Dorothy asked, “Do you feel that this is none of our business?"

(Loud rap) “Yes."

“Will you discuss more personal affairs later, when you get to know us better?"

(Rap) "Yes."

When the questioning became too personal the raps ceased, and scratchings were heard in their place. This seemed to be Philip's way of saying that he would not answer the question, rather than that he did not know the answer. Was it perhaps because, as close as the group had become with each other, some may have had personal reservations about the questions becoming too intimate or revealing? Or was this some unconscious hesitation on the part of the questioner?

One particular session went like this. The dialogue is quoted as recorded on the tapes

“Were you a Tory. Philip?" Al asked.

(Rap) "Yea."

“Of course he was," Dorothy said. “Hr was a follower of the king, wasn't he?"

"He could have been a Catholic, too/* Ins observed. “Were you a Catholic, Philip?"

(Rap, rap) "No."

“Oh. 1 wonder what he was? Were you a Protestant?"

Slight hesitant knockings, followed by scratchings. “Were you an Anglo-Catholic?" asked Bernice. (Rap) "Yes."

"Did you change your religion after you met Margo?" asked Bernice.

(Rap) "Yes."

Philip always seemed very hesitant about declaring his religion, wavering from Catholic to Protestant, and even io Anglo-Catholic which, of course, did not exist in his day. On

one occasion he replied, in answer to a question, that he was Jewish. The question was asked in a poking way by one of the group. The members of the group were of different religious persuasions.

It was decided then to abandon questions about religion for the lime being

"We would like to ask about Dorothea" somebody said. “And about your own family. Did you have any children?"

Immediately violent scratching from under the table. "Did Dorothea refuse to have any children?" Dorothy asked

More scratchings

'Did you live together?"

(Rap. rap) "No." (Accompanied by more scratchings.) "Perhaps he trying to tell us we are getting too personal." Bernice said. “Perhaps he doesn't want to discuss all these personal details?"

(Loud rap) "Yes."

"Do you feel that this is none of our business?" Iris asked. (Rap) "Yes."

"Will you tell us later?" Sid asked. (Rap)

“Yes."

There were some teasing remarks then about Philip s wanting to keep his love life secret, and as there was a certain amount of banter among the members at this stage, it was decided to abandon the subject.

"Shall we sing you a song? Would you like Lloyd George Knew My Father?"

(Loud rap. rap) "No."

"Anything bur that." someone commented. "All right, can we ask you some more questions?"

(Rap) "Yes "

So long as we keep away from his love life. Let's talk about the Civil War." Lome suggested, "He should surely have a lot to tell us about that."

Conversation then ensued about the war, and it was suggested

that he would probably have commanded his own regiment on behalf of the king and against Cromwell s armies.

Did you have your own regiment?" Sid asked. (Rap) "Yes"

Were you wounded in the fighting? (Rap.

rap) "No."

"Did you lose many of your men?" (Rap, rap)

"No."

"I wonder which battles he fought in" Lome asked. "Philip, did you fight at Naseby?"

(Rap. rap) "No."

"Did you fight at Marston Moor?" (Rap)

"Yes."

"I wonder what weapons they used?" Al asked. "Did you use pikemen?"

(Rap) "Yes"

"Would they have had guns of any kind then?" someone asked.

"They would have had muskets," Lome said.

(Immediately confirmatory rap) "Yes." "You had

musketeers?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"You fired ball and shot?" (Rap)

"Yes."

"Did you prefer firearms?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Of course he would/* someone remarked, "much more effective"

(Confirmatory rap) "Yes."

"I wonder if he ever went spying," Dorothy said. "Did you, Philip?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Did you go often?"

(Rap, rap) "No." "Just

sometimes?" (Rap)

"Yes."

"Did you hive special training?" (Rap)

"Yes."

"Did you train your own men as spies?"

(Rap) "Yes" "Many

of them?" (Rap. rap)

"No" "Just a few?"

(Rap) "Yes"

"Did they go behind the enemy lines?" (Rap)

"Yes."

"Did they ever get caught?"

(Rap, rap) "No."

Some discussion followed on the role of spying in war. and someone said that Philip was lucky that neither he nor his men were ever caught.

"Did you kill anyone during the war?" he was asked

(Rap) “Yes " "Many

men?" (Rap. rap)

“No." "More than

ten?" (Rap. rap)

"No." "Less than

ten?" (Rap) "Yes "

At this stage the group offered to sing another song, but Philip when questioned refused and indicated, under questioning, that he was willing to answer more questions. The questioning took on a new angle

Asked if he knew the king. Philip answered, as expected,

yes.

"Were you often at court, Philip?" Dorothy asked. (Rap)

“Yes."

"It was, of course, the court of Charles I?” (Rap) "Yes."

The group made some comments among themselves regarding the history of Charles I.

When was he beheaded?" Sid asked "He was beheaded

when Cromwell came to power, wasn't he, Philip?" (Rap) "Yes."

Actually Charles I was beheaded some years after Cromwell came to power, but nobody in the group was sure of the historical facts, so although a question about this got a yes, which was required by the thinking of the group, the answer historically was incorrect.

Philip was then asked if he was loyal to Charles. There was silence at first, and then a sort of tentative scratching. This was a puzzling response, as up until that time there had been no question of disloyalty to Charles. Philip was a Cavalier and a staunch supporter of the king. The story was obviously about to be embroidered. Somebody in the group suggested that maybe Philip changed sides after Cromwell came to power. Still only slight scratchings from the table, and no definite answer

5.
Philip 's Story is filled out by the Group

From the account of the experiment thus far, the reader will have gathered that the raps and movements of the table seemed to be very closely related, if not actually activated, by the knowledge, thoughts, will, moods, and powers of concentration of each member of the group. The questions and answers necessarily take on a somewhat stilted format since Philip is indeed restricted by the necessity of answering only yes (one rap) or no (two raps) to the questions asked. During the sessions, however, the running dialogue did not seem Stilted, the atmosphere being more like that of a room in which several people were carrying on an interesting and animated conversation.

The questions were interspersed with comments and observations from all members of the group, including some speculations voiced generally by one member of the group to another, and not necessarily aimed at Philip. Often Philip would interrupt these speculations by rapping, to confirm or deny the unspoken queries. The actual volume and quality of the raps would also vary with the answers, so that it became possible to differentiate between an enthusiastic response and a mere confirmation of a well-known fact.

Some of the answers were obviously elicited "by committee." If the group was unanimously agreed in their own minds on the answer that should be given, a loud rap would usually

confirm their judgement. If the answer seemed doubtful — either because the individual or group had not been unanimous or sure about the right answer, or because of their ignorance of some fact of history, there might be several seconds of hesitation before a rap was elicited.

Usually the answers would come from directly under the hand of the person asking the question, as if Philip was answering just that one person. But the rap would be heard by the others, and often felt as a vibration. It also seemed as if there was a slight difference in the quality of the rap for each person. As has been mentioned before, Philip would also beat time when the group was singing and indulge in a series of "rolling knocks" when something seemed to amuse him.

It was not surprising that each member of the group became quite adept at carrying on a conversation as if with an imaginary guest. There was rarely confusion. Sometimes someone would forget that Philip could answer only yes or no, and a question would be asked that required a different type of answer. When this mistake was made Philip would invariably produce scratching noises On one occasion, during a good session, one of the group jokingly asked Philip to give a rap under each person's hand at the table. Philip took the request literally, and each member felt a loud rap under his or her hand at the same moment in time.

Another typical meeting, which was taped and recorded, went like this.

The group met, stopping on their way to the table to eat a candy. They placed one on the table for Philip

"Here is your candy. Philip. Would you like a song?'

(Rap) "Yes."

Andy. "What shall we sing?" Lilliburlero and Green sleeves? Perhaps he doesn't like the Lloyd George song because we sing it to the tune of Onward Christian Soldiers, and that was one of the songs sung by Oliver Cromwell's Puritan army."

(Rap) "Yes."

Dorothy: "There you are, I knew he didn't like Lloyd George."

Someone else: "We can keep it to threaten him with if he won't talk to us."

To some extent this is how this particular song was used in subsequent sessions. Ii usually provoked a violent response in table movement. So Lilliburlero and Green sleeves were sung, and the conversation was resumed It was decided to change the conversation completely and to ask Philip about his personal likes and dislikes.

"Do you like horses?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"I expect you had a favorite horse?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"I bet it was a white one, was it, Philip?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Did you have any mistresses?"

(Loud Rap) "Yes."

The group went on to suggest, and to elicit from Philip, that he had had a good time in London, and he was asked if he enjoyed going to the chocolate houses and meeting the ladies there. As an enthusiastic yes was elicited by this line of questioning, the group went on to tease him about his love of chocolate houses. As an historical fact, however, chocolate was not known then, and chocolate houses were not introduced into London society until more than a century after the date of Philip's "death."

"Did you get drunk sometimes?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"But not too often?"

(Rap. rap) "No."

Philip was nor a drunkard, and he did not get into fights. "Did people fight duels in your day?"

(Rap, rap) "No." When Cromwell came to power the fighting of duels was banned

Was life much gayer before Cromwell came to power?"

(Rap) "Yes."

As everyone started to discuss the differences between life in London during Charles' and Cromwell's rules, raps continued to come from the table as various points were agreed upon Philip was asked if he had a position at court and the answer was yes. But when he was asked, "Did Dorothea go to court with you?" there were knocks and scratchings, which seemed to indicate that this was a subject that Philip did not want mentioned. However, on this occasion the various members of the group persisted in asking questions about Dorothea, assuring Philip that they were his friends, and that they needed to know all about him.

"Were you forced to marry Dorothea?" he was asked. (Rap) "Yes."

"Did her parents force this marriage upon you? Did they need the financial help your money could give?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Was she a cruel person?"

(Rap) "Yes."

As questions and comments about Dorothea came thick and fast from the group, a picture of her emerged. She was a beautiful but cold woman, physically and mentally cruel, whom he had married to please his father and her parents, who needed the money he brought to the marriage. He had never loved her. She refused to bear him children, and they lived separate lives Marriages of this kind were approved by the court as was the custom in those days, but it never became clear why Philip should have been prepared to enter into such a one-sided bargain; however, he did. Dorothea was the oldest in the family, she had brothers and a sister, but she was spoiled and indulged by her parents.

At this point Philip was again questioned about his religion, and he answered yes to a question as to whether he was born an Anglo-Catholic.

At this point everyone paused for some conversation and to sing songs. At most sittings there would have been much

more singing and joke telling, but conditions seemed to be good on this particular night, The raps came continually, and it was evident that the group had plenty of energy.

Questioned further about Margo, Philip said, to everyone's surprise, that she had not lived in the gatehouse, but in his quarters in the house.

"Was it in the stables?"

(Rap. rap) "No."

"Perhaps they would have called them something else in his day?" someone suggested "Perhaps she lived in the main house."

"Perhaps she lived in his quarters," Bernice speculated (Rap) "Yes"

So Margo had lived in the main house. "Did you go to the theater?"

(Rap) "Yes"

"Did you see plays by Shakespeare and Marlowe?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Did you walk over London Bridge?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"I wonder what he would think now of London Bridge being sold to America, and being assembled somewhere out in the desert?" (This from Dorothy.) A series of scratchings was the only answer they got to this question. "They had houses on it in his time." (This from Iris.) (Rap) "Yes."

"Did you cross the bridge many times?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"They had a lot of illness in his time—plague, smallpox — all sorts of illnesses."

"Did anyone in your family die of plague?" (This from Andy.)

(Rap) "Yes "

"I wonder who? Dorothea didn't die utill after he did — after he threw himself from the battlements. Could it have been her parents?"

(Rap, rap) "No."

Was it his parents?"

(Rap) "Yes."

When asked about Charles I's pets. Philip asserted that the king did not like horses or dogs, but that he loved cats. This is at variance with the historical facts, but the questioner was an ardent cat lover. Questioned further, Philip said he himself didn't like cats; he preferred dogs.

Did you use dogs when hunting?"

(Rap) "Yes."

Questioned as to whether they hunted boar or deer, Philip replied yes to deer Not only did he hunt deer, but he had deerhounds. He also kept peregrines. Asked if he used guns for hunting, the answer was yes, but when after birds he used human beaters* to retrieve, not dogs. Yes was the reply.

Someone asked if he had had smallpox, and the answer was no. Dorothy followed up by suggesting — "But I bet you wished Dorothea had it?" To this question, asked half in jest, there came a series of rolling knocks. When asked directly if Dorothea ever had smallpox, the answer was no.

He was asked if he liked drinking, as he had shown an obvious preference for drinking songs, and always beat time vigorously to them. A loud rap was his reply.

By this time the reader should be convinced that in the vast majority of cases, the answers Philip gave to questions asked him were in accordance with the responses that the questioners expected to receive from him Or, to put the matter in reverse, the questioner was usually able to elicit the answers from Philip that he expected Rather than bore the reader with a long description of the questions and answers given, the following summary of Philip s life and times were filled in by the group. There were, however, some anomalies and these will be described in detail at the end of the chapter

*This is a custom in England when hunting grouse, pheasant, partridge, etc. The beaters precede the hunters and hit the undergrowth with sticks to make the birds fly up The beaten also retrieve any shot birds near them.

Philip indeed enjoyed a drink and admitted under questioning that he had a brew master who on one occasion fell into the vat. He was not fond of music and admitted that the singing bothered him. A new song, Rock-a-Bye Baby, was substituted for one of the old songs, and Philip appeared to like this song very much, as he caused the table to rock during the singing

Philip had many friends, hut Dorothea did not. He did not seem to like the questions about Dorothea, and perhaps it is significant that the group succeeded in building up a somewhat unsympathetic portrait of what she was like Philip admitted that she was spoiled, ungrateful, unfeeling, and cold. He also admitted to striking her at times.

The sessions during which the group were literally "putting Philip together" were enjoyed by everyone, and the responses from Philip were very definite.

Among other things it emerged that Philip gambled at times, but not to excess, and that he gave baskets of food to hit tenants on the farm. Dorothea was not popular with the tenants, nor indeed, with anyone else. When it was suggested that he might do away with her, the answer was hesitant.

The group was interested to know if he had heard of Canada. He had not, but he knew ' The New Land" as the recently discovered New World and admitted to having had friends there. He also admitted to having taken "the Grand Tour" of Europe, which it was customary' to expect of young gentlemen of the day, and he had visited France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, and Spain. Young Sidney, who was always popular with Philip, wondered, "Would he have gone to Transylvania?"

At that moment Dr. George Owen, who was also always popular with Philip, entered the room. He and Sid were two people who did not need to put their hands on the table to elicit answers from Philip, and both of them could usually receive answers without touching the table at all.

"He probably didn't know it as Transylvania," Dr. Owen

suggested, "Try him with Bohemia."

Sid asked, "Did you go to Bohemia?"

(Rap) "Yes."

"Did you know Elizabeth, the Winter Queen?" Dr. Owen asked.

(Rap) "Yes."

"That's odd," Dr. Owen said. "He says he knew Elizabeth, and yet previously he said he never knew Rupert, her brother-in-law." (Prince Rupert commanded the Royal Cavalry during the Civil War.)

Dr. Owen continued to assert that Rupert was Elizabeth's brother-in-law, and Philip continued, by a series of sturdy double raps, to deny that he was. Nobody else could recollect hearing of Elizabeth and Rupert together, nor of their relationship to each other. Dr. Owen retired to look up the matter in an encyclopedia. He discovered that Rupert was not Elizabeth's brother-in-law.

This was one of the few anomalies in Philip's replies during the sessions. Philip turned out to be right. This could have been because some of the members in the group were having fun with Dr. Owen, contradicting his statement. Or it could have been that Dr. Owen knew, in his subconscious, that he had got the relationship wrong, and the group was "telepathizing" him with their joint energy. This was one of the few occasions when Philip strayed away from facts that were either known or accepted by the group.

This series of sessions rounded out the story of Philip's life and times, his personality, his likes and dislikes, his relationship with Dorothea, his religious and political views. Throughout all the sessions, he maintained consistency in his replies to questions. He even gave consistent replies to questioning about events that had already been mentioned, even if the answer had been wrong or historically inaccurate. This seemed to have some significance especially because in some cases the group had become aware of the inaccuracy.

For example, during this period Philip, in answer to a

question about whether or not he had visited St. Petersburg, replied yes. The group learned subsequently what they had *not* known at the time of the first question, namely that St. Petersburg did not exist in Philip s time; it was, in fact, a swamp. Nevertheless, when at a later date the question was slipped in. "Did you visit St. Petersburg?"' the answer came again as yes. There was a sense of fun about this decision, as well as a determination to preserve the personality of Philip as they had created him and not as historical fact might dictate.

The group had by now developed Philip into a completely invented personality. His full existence was a composite of their own imaginations, given free rein by their own creativity, the product of what historical knowledge they had of his times, a character born of their own desire to bring him as much to actuality as they could. From the first simple story of a Cavalier nobleman who made a loveless marriage, and who involved himself with another woman living in the same household as himself, and his subsequent suicide. Philip had now taken on the characteristics of a real person who might have lived at this period of history.

A typical Cavalier, with an appreciation of the ladies, he was beginning to show some favoritism for certain members of the group. He liked his ale, he loved his horses and hunting dogs, and had been a hunter of deer during his earthly life. He reacted quite violently to the mention of his wife and confirmed that this had been a marriage of convenience only, arranged by his and by her parents for reasons of combining the family estates Surprisingly enough, however, his feelings for Margo, his gypsy love, and for whose sake he had reputedly died, could vary, and on one occasion at least during this period he answered the question, “Did you love Margo very much?" with a vigorous no.

He had an obvious sense of humor and loved a joke. He always appreciated the jokes told by the group members and would initiate a joke himself, sometimes by his replies to questions, sometimes by the actions of the table itself.

The group members were now reacting to him entirely as if he were another member of the group. He was included to the conversation, but they were careful not to "grill" him by continuous questioning They would tease him and joke with him They would tease him, or treat him as a spoiled, indulged child. On one occasion they threatened him, with unforeseen and surprising results.

They had on this occasion been asking a lot of questions, and the raps in answer had become somewhat feebler, and even indefinite in the responses. Sid said, jokingly, but also with some degree of meaning behind the remark, “Philip, if you won't talk to us, we can send you away and get somebody else!" Until that moment, probably nobody had actually thought about this possible line of action, and it was almost as if it hit them suddenly. There was a silence, and no more raps, and the group wondered if they had indeed sent Philip away. They discussed the situation and were able to relate it to the articles by Brookes-Smith and Hunt. These researchers stated that just as it was absolutely necessary to have complete faith in one's ability to produce phenomena, so any deliberate attempt on their part to end the phenomena would result probably in doing just that. Sid's joking threat had somehow disturbed the rapport of the group, and they agreed that they should never adopt a threatening procedure again It took most of the evening, during this particular session, to coax the raps back again.

6.
The Physical Phenomena Produced

Perhaps this is the time to recapitulate for the reader a more detailed account of the physical phenomena produced. What had been achieved was really remarkable in many ways, and although we shall reserve for later chapters our attempts at evaluating and perhaps giving some explanation of the results of the experiment, it might be said at this point that the sessions with Philip continued to fascinate the group.

Although none of them had made any claim to psychic experience or talent at the beginning of the sessions, they *had* learned something about meditating techniques, and they *had* achieved a close rapport with one another as a group. They had not expected any special type of phenomena when they started the experiment — although they had hoped for an apparition or appearance which was one focus of their attention — Philip himself, had chosen the particular type of response, namely the raps.

As their interest grew in this imaginary focus of their attention, it seemed to them as if they were gaining some rapport with an unknown entity whose reality became more pronounced as their own interest and imaginations were stimulated. It is probably not too much to say that as their own interest increased, their rapport with their imaginary "ghost" also grew stronger and closer. Conversely, when their interest flagged, either from boredom, or when their physical concentration

wined, or when they grew tired, the raps became weaker And although this account of the experiment has been written as if Philip was indeed a new existing entity they had brought into being, the group as a whole was perfectly conscious of the fact that *it WAS they who had created him*, filled out his historical life and that of the characters surrounding him, and that he was — if one can use the analogy — *a personality creation of their own minds.*

When a sitting started each member would greet Philip by name, with "Hello, Philip," and the table would respond with a rap. Usually this would be /r/r under the hand of the speaker, but what followed was in Philip's hands There would be table movements as well as rappings at each session. The raps were felt at first as a form of vibration which seemed to be localized within the table top, almost within the material of the table. Usually a plastic-covered, wooden card table was used. The group also used a heavy all-wooden garden table, which produced louder raps than those given out by the smaller label. They also used a large refectory-type dining table. At a later date another group — the Lilith group — made use of a clear Plexiglas table, with metal legs, and also obtained raps from this table. It appeared that it did not matter what the table was made of; all of them could give raps

It was only in the beginning sessions that the raps were heard more as vibrations than as raps, although in all sessions there were a number of raps which were *felt* rather than *heard* The majority of raps were loud enough to be heard by ail members of the group, or by anyone within six to eight feet of the table, even at times by those in the next room. Occasionally a question was answered by a rap that would only be felt or heard by the questioner, but most of the raps were loud enough to be easily recorded. In fact, the group taped a microphone to the underside of the table and recorded many of the sessions, both questions and answers.

During later sessions Philip produced, upon request, raps in ihe adjoining walls, which were plastered.

In addition to raps, there were other noises. Often the table would creak and groan, as if something was attempting to wrench it a pan Creaking and groaning often preceded the raps or table movement, and the sitters came to regard this as an indication of the build-up of some energy or force. There would be an indication of movement within the table top, and the group fell somehow that the table had come alive. There was also a definite difference between *the feel* of the table top when phenomena were about to happen and on the occasions when nothing was happening. When Philip resented a question and did not wish to answer it, indicating perhaps a certain inhibition or hesitation on the part of the questioner, there was a strange scratching noise within the table. This sounded as if somebody had run his fingernails along the whole length or width of the table underneath. The first time this happened it startled the sitters. Most of them were unaware of the fact that scratching sounds are often heard in poltergeist outbreaks, and none of them was expecting any such noise. It became a continued feature of the sittings, and while it could be taken to mean that Philip did not know the answer io the question being asked, it generally had a stronger implication that he did not wish to answer the question. Did this indicate some psychological inhibition or uncertainty on the part of the questioner?

The room that was used for the sittings was kept exclusively for this purpose. It was a small room, ten by twelve feet in sue, with a deep pile carpet on the floor, and plain white walls. The chairs were ordinary metal folding chain, of the kind used in the meeting halls, and although two or three tables were used m turn, the group finally kept to the original plastic-topped card table, as has been described Two leather cushions — antique — were on the floor A pair of fencing foils, as a tribute to Philip's love of fencing, were in one corner, pictures of Diddington Hall and Packenham Manor — Dorothea's home, a mile or so away from Diddington — were laid on the table, and a dish of candies was also

kept on it.

Philip's portrait was also kept in the room, usually standing on top of the lighting panel. This panel, which is also used for work in aura-vie wing, consists of a number of colored bulbs behind a frosted glass screen. These are switched on from a control panel, and by manipulation of the controls any selection of color and degree of light can be obtained. One lead from the control panel is connected to the wall plug. The apparatus was designed for the society by one of its members who is an electronics engineer, and it is both a solid and an efficient piece of apparatus

The reason for describing this in detail is that on occasions during the later sessions, Philip presumably caused the lights in this apparatus to flicker in accordance with verbal instructions given him. The only way the members could see bow this could be done (other than paranormally) would be if someone actually pulled at the plug (which no one could do since it was in full view), or if someone touched the control panels (which again no one could do since this was also in full view). The flickering could, of course, be due to an alteration in the power supply to the house, but no other electrical equipment or lights flickered at the same time. It seemed, in any case, too much of a coincidence that each time the group asked Philip to "flick the lights," there would be such a reaction coincidentally due to a fault in the power supply. Normally the light given out was very steady and never flickered. If there had been a malfunction, this would surely have become obvious during previous hours of aura-viewing using the same light panel, during the times when the light was being used for the Philip sittings

There was also in the room an overhead electric light. This was sometimes on when Philip flicked the lights of the control panel, but this particular light did not flicker. On one occasion the lighting combination that the group was using was rather more red than usual, and during the sessions one of the red bulbs in the panel switched off. Leaving a light that

was more pleasant to the eyes. The sitters commented that the light had changed and softened. It was realized then that the red light had switched off, and the immediate reaction was that it had probably burned out. However, on investigation this proved not to be the case. The bulb was in perfect order, and the only way n could have been turned off would have been if someone had turned the knob that controlled that particular battery of bulbs. Bui nobody had turned it off. The group had been sitting around the table at the time, with their hands on top, and the control panel was always in full view of everyone. When Philip was asked if he had changed the lighting because it was too red, he said yes!

In another small room or alcove, just adjacent, but without a communicating door, was a record player. Records of the period were played on this during the sessions. The then- current, best-selling record of "Amazing Grace." played by the band of the Scots Greys, was a great favorite with the group, as was "Green sleeves," and also several harpsichord pieces of the time. Some "Jackdaw" souvenirs of the English Civil War were put in the room — documents, proclamations, etc.

The original attitude of each member of the group toward the experiment, when it first started, had been one of scepticism. This word is defined in the *Canon Oxford Dictionary* as "Inclined to suspense of judgement, given to questioning of truth of facts and soundness of inferences." Even with a good rapport established among the group as a whole as the experiment proceeded, everyone tried to maintain the same attitude toward what he or she was doing. The members of the group remained scrupulous in their approach, were self-disciplined in any judgements they made, and were always conscious of the necessity of not making unwarranted assumptions as to the cause of the phenomena.

It should be mentioned again that every possible precaution was taken to make sure that none of the effects was produced by any member of the group, whether consciously or

unconsciously. When such accidental actions did occur from time to time, they were immediately admitted by members of the group. For instance, if someone accidentally tapped a finger, or knocked with a knee, or felt he or she was pushing the table, he or she immediately said so. If another member of the group thought someone in the group was causing an effect, he or she would immediately say so.

Over the weeks the members trained themselves to keep their hands, legs, and feet very still, even when they were talking and laughing with great animation The fact that the sessions took place in good light, and that a number of visitors were able to observe for themselves and indeed to take part in the sessions, also made it easier to believe that the phenomena were not caused by any individual in the group This was something which the group members found very interesting. They had watched each other carefully and been very aware of the possibilities of self-deception. Not once did any of their visitors or observers level any accusation of possible fraud against them They had expected to be accused of self-deception, or to have people say, "You must somehow be doing it yourselves, either consciously or unconsciously," and they were prepared to answer such criticism and to detail the precautions they had taken One session of seeing for themselves seemed to convince the visitors that everything was as objective and controlled as it could be.

We return to a more detailed account of the physical phenomena; when the new series of sessions started in the summer of 1973. Because of the holiday season, the first three or four sittings were conducted in the homes of the various members of the group. It was only after the fifth session that they decided to move into the one room at the society's headquarters, and to keep to this particular milieu.

The plastic-topped card table which they had been using was the property of Al, at whose home they had been meeting, and on the last night there before the changeover, the group told Philip they proposed to move the meeting place the next

week Philip at that stage seemed to show some reluctance to being moved, and a number of scratching sounds were heard when the matter was mentioned However the decision was taken, and on saying good night the group promised to see him at the new headquarters the next week His portrait, and the other paraphernalia which the group associated with him, were taken away.

It was decided to leave Al's table and to use an all-wooden card table which was in Philip s new room. When the group met the following week the rappings were slow in starting, and the group members wandered if Philip had indeed come with them. However, the phenomena finally occurred, and the wooden card table started to move around with quite a violent action. There was an interesting sequel to this move. Al lives in a bachelor apartment and has a special locking device on his door to discourage burglars. When Al left home that evening Philip's table was in its usual place at the far end of his living room, against the window, with a chair against it. When Al returned that night, the chair was overturned and the table had traveled across the room, and was in the hallway. There was no evidence of any break-in. Al said that when leaving that evening, he had said to himself, "Come on Philip, you've got to go to your new home tonight. " He had then locked the door and gone out. It is impossible to say when the table actually made the movement, whether at the moment of Al's leaving, or during the initial period when the group was trying to summon Philip.

It might be of interest to detail the events of the first evening in Philips own room as recorded, as each evening was, immediately after the event. The rappings in answer to the questions were recorded on tape

The room had been prepared and a card table similar to the one we had been using at Al's home was ready Al brought in the pictures of Diddington, and the group assembled. Sid had not yet arrived and the raps were slower than usual in starting. There was some speculation as to whether Philip had

decided to come or whether he had remained behind at Al's. Dorothy wondered if Philip was waiting for Sid, who had already become a favorite with him. However, after a few moments, the raps started, and then the table began to stand on one leg and to move about the room. (Sometimes this was a straight movement on one leg; at other times the table would revolve in a sort of "waltzing" movement.) The table also tended to turn on its side and slide along on just two legs, with the other two in the air. During all these gyrations the group members, as far as possible, kept their hands on the top of the table, to whatever position that "top" might be. But even so, the table, on two legs, would move away from them, or toward them, in a completely random fashion.

At times it escaped from their hands altogether and would land to a corner of the room, or be wedged in the doorway When a latecomer entered the room the table rushed toward him or her It pushed around the room, trapping members in corners, generally causing confusion. Whenever it stopped, no matter to what position, the members asked questions, and raps came from it in answer Once it stopped with three legs in the air, and one leg resting against the wall. Only a few of the sitters had been able to keep their hands on the top, and with one corner only on the floor, the table scratched out answers on the wall with the remaining leg.

After some of this chasing around the room, the sitters were tired and uncomfortable The table at that stage was rocking, another characteristic phenomenon which preceded a sliding or rushing movement, and this would also occur as accompaniment to a song Dorothy exclaimed somewhat crossly, "Well, if you're not tired Philip. I am" Why don't you go right over on your back, with your legs in the air, and then we'll have a rest and some cool lemonade " Whereupon, the table did just that Although all the sitters were standing up, their hands on top of the table, the table turned over gently, and then just flipped upside down with all its legs in the air.

While they were resting, Dr. Owen's son, Robin Owen,

joined them Although he had been told of the things that were happening, he was fairly skeptical of this type of phenomena He was invited to stay for a while and watch, so he sat on a chai r in an alcove of the room As soon as the group resumed, the table started in motion again, and rushed over to Robin as if to look at him. After some time with the table performing all sorts of evolutions, and moving around the room, the group tired of this, and said firmly. "We are tired of all this rushing around — we would much rather you stayed in one spot and used the energy to lift the table off the floor."

The group had decided that a straight levitation, with all table legs off the floor at once, would be a most convincing demonstration of the paranormal nature of the phenomena. The sitters grouped themselves in a light circle, with the table in the middle. Robin was invited to join them to see what happened and was asked to introduce himself He said, somewhat self-consciously, "Hello Philip, I'm Robin." The table responded by a slight rap Sue then said. "That's not loud enough. Give a louder one for him." Whereupon a quite audible and firm tap was heard immediately under Robin's hand, and he said he fell a lot of vibration.

This was another milestone in the chain of events, as Robin was the first person the group had invited in as a visitor. They were delighted that the experiment still worked. Philip was complimented, and he was asked for another loud rap for "George, who is upstairs." Again the table obliged, this time with a very loud rap, apparently from the middle of the table.

The sitters then decided to sing a nonsense song, centered on bottles of beer, a theme which they had already discovered Philip loved. After some preliminary attempts to edge its way out of the circle, the table was stopped by the various sitters by using reprimands such as, "Go away, *I* am not moving, get off the floor and go *up* if you wish to move." The table "sulked" for a while, not moving or doing anything. (When Philip was there — even if there was no movement or rapping, the table had a feeling of aliveness, perhaps of vibration.

which seemed quite different from its feel under normal circumstances.) The group persisted with their singing. As the song became more spontaneous the table started to keep time by bouncing up and down, shaking, and at times knocks were heard, keeping time with the beat. As the song went on, the table became very active and moved very fast. There was some fear that it would break up altogether, as the legs could be heard creaking. Some members of the group were convinced that all four legs of the table were off the ground at the same time. When the song was finished the singers were exhausted, and it was decided to say good night. Each sitter bade Philip good night in turn, the table rapping an answer under each of the sitters' hands individually in reply.

For (he next two or three sittings the group decided to concentrate on increasing the strength of the rapping, and also to persuade him to perform some physical feats, in particular to levitate the table. They agreed to postpone, for the time being, their original idea of producing an apparition.

During the following week the group met as usual. As the card table used the previous week was getting somewhat rickety because of the rough treatment meted out by Philip, it had been arranged that another table, stronger and made of heavy wood, would be available. This was a square table, with solid wooden legs, and a thicker top than the card table— a fairly heavy table.

The sitters decided to start with the new table — the card table was folded up and put in a corner for the time being. Almost immediately after starting, Philip announced his presence by clear and unmistakable raps. The sitters introduced themselves and each obtained an individual greeting. Energy was built up in the usual manner by songs, jokes, and dramatic recitations by Sue, to which Philip always responded. The table showed little inclination to move at first, but there were tentative creakings, scratchings, and slight movements, almost as if Philip were exploring the table and trying it out. After a while it was felt that this wooden table was rather heavy for

Philip to move, although the raps emanating from it were louder and clearer than those from the plastic topped table. In fact, during later sessions when the group, for the sake of variety, switched from the plastic-topped table back to this same wooden table, its movements were so fast and violent that marks were being made in the wall, so its use was discontinued

Later, the heavy refectory-type table was tried out for a session or two, and again the raps seemed to be stronger in a heavy all-wooden table Their use had to be discontinued, however, because of potential damage to the wails. The group seemed to have proved to their satisfaction that these heavier wooden tables were just as capable of violent movement as the lighter type of card table

So the wooden table was put aside and the card table returned to the center of the room. The raps immediately proceeded from this table, and it quickly became active. It was encouraged to chase Sid, and it did this with much enthusiasm, so much so that at one time he was actually standing on a chair in a comer, daring it to come and get him. The table appeared to be trying to climb the chair to do so. The table was lying on one leg, with the other three extended, and because of the lack of space only two people's hands were able to be on it, and the hands were resting very lightly on it. The rest of the group were standing back, watching Eventually one leg broke off the table altogether, and one of the group responded by saying, "Now look what you've done — you're breaking up the table".

Go on, smash it completely," said Sid. "You might as well show us what you can do." The table at this moment was lying on one leg (the partner of the missing one), so that the comer of the table where the leg was missing was also on the ground — the remaining two legs were in the air. and every-one's hands were still in the middle of the table top The table then proceeded to perform a sawing operation, just as if it were trying to work the other leg off. It did succeed in weak

coning this leg. It then righted itself, and in spite of one leg being missing performed a few gyrations around the room

During this phase Bernice, whose hand was near a corner, had a piece of flesh from the middle of her palm trapped between the two edges of the comer joint of the table. This was painful and she cried out — it was difficult to free her for a moment. It could not be seen how she had become trapped. The joint was completely closed when the table was stopped but during the movements it must have opened sufficiently to catch her hand. During the evening, along with the table's chasing Sid, there had also been some joking, urging it to "chase Bernice."

The card table eventually became no longer usable. Apart from the missing leg, the other legs were about to fall off, and the top appeared to be coming apart It was decided to revert to the wooden cable. This now became much more active than before; it would gyrate around the room with one leg on the floor, and the other three in the air In spite of many urgings the group could not obtain a full levitation at this stage. The raps from the wooden table were much louder and more resonant than from the card table.

At this point George Owen came to see if the group would allow some visitors in who had been in the house during the sitting, and who were taking part in another experiment. As George entered the room he was introduced, and Philip was asked as usual to say hello. A light rap was given, which was barely audible. Philip was told that he could do better than that, and to try again He responded with a loud clear rap. He was then asked if George could join the circle. A rap signaled yes, so George put his fingers on the table and asked several questions, eliciting loud and clear raps in reply. Philip intimated in answer to questioning that he did not want the group upstairs to come down and watch, but the sitters decided that they should come and stand in the doorway, two or three at a time, to watch. Psychologically, it was interesting that occasionally Philip as a collective voice would differ from

the views outwardly expressed by individual members They later decided that although they felt other members should have the right and opportunity to watch the experiment, subconsciously they were feeling reticent and modest about what they were doing.

So George went upstairs to get the visitors. As he left the room the table made a sudden short rush after him, which surprised both him and the sitters. It was noted by the group that the table was apt to try to follow people out of the room. Unfortunately the door was narrow, and the table needed to be on its side in order to get through, and so its efforts to get out were frustrated.

Some of George's visitors did eventually come down to Philip s room. The table movements decreased considerably, but the raps in answer to questions were clearly audible to the people observing from the doorway. One of these persons was later invited to join the group around the table, and one more visitor a little later. George also resumed his place at the table so that for a short time there were three complete strangers joining the group around the table. The raps continued audibly and clearly, but the table movement was much less

At this stage the sitters were all tired because the session had lasted two hours. One important fact was noted at this time — although the table movements came unexpectedly at most times, and were *completely* at random, the raps continued to come regularly in response to questions, nearly always having meaning, occasionally beating time to a song, but *never* random fashion. Occasionally, if in their excitement at talking together, the group temporarily forgot Philip, there might be a series of attention-getting raps As soon as the normal procedure of questioning was continued, the raps also resumed their normal pattern. Psychologically, this apparent difference in purposiveness on the part of the group, in relation to the quality and quantity of rappings elicited, was very interesting. In this context the key word is PURPOSIVENESS. The raps did not come at *random,* they came in response to specific intention

by the member of the group, and when raps were not expected they did not come. Thu in answer to questions and comments that maybe this was a random happening, and we were imagining that raps were actually answering questions

When the utters decided to say good night, they received answering raps under their hands. The visitors participating in this ceremony also received acknowledgment of their presence. Following the session the sitters, with the visitors, tried to duplicate the maneuvers of the table by deliberately tugging and pushing — both individually and as a group It was found to be impossible to duplicate these movements. The room is carpeted in broad loom and normal tugging or pushing resulted in the table either falling over or "stalling." It could not be made to glide as it had done during the sittings. The sounds accompanying the rappings have a particular lone, which was easily recognizable, not only by the group members but by the observers. Efforts were made to duplicate this particular sound by tapping with fingers, rings, and thumbnails. But this could not be done. During the greater part of the sessions the group is actually standing around the table, in a good light, so that any question of the raps being produced by knees or feet does not arise When the group put paper doilies between their hands and the table, both rapping and table movements continued unchanged.

On one occasion, when the group was using the paper doilies, and only three people had their hands on the table while the rest were standing by, knockings were heard coming from a wall of the room and not from the table Later, with the table in the middle of the room, and all the group sitting around it, knockings were again heard in the wall. The large house is completely detached, old. and solid, so that it would take a very loud bang from outside the walls to be heard downstairs in the basement room which was being used. In fact, the noise came from an internal wall. It was established that during the entire evening nobody went into the room on the other side of that wall (which is a photography darkroom).

On the same evening, when the group was saying good night, Philip surprised everyone by giving a flurry *cf* knocks after all the good nights had been said, instead of an individual knock for each person. This had happened occasionally at other sittings and was regarded as a little joke on Philip's part.

During the next few weeks, because of a round of colds and flu, attendance was depleted at the sessions, and all of the members missed some sessions. It was determined as a result of this that as few as four people could produce the phenomena. As long as four of the group were present (it did not matter which four), the phenomena still occurred. If the smaller group was feeling tired, or perhaps as was sometimes the case, on the verge of a cold, the raps might be weaker and the table movements more feeble, but they always occurred.

There was only one session at which the members wondered if they were about to lose their strange ability. There were five members present on this occasion. The notes record that one was on the verge of flu, and another had a severe headache. The raps were much weaker than usual, the cable movements lethargic. In fact, the table movements consisted only of a few rocking* during the singing of a favorite song At one time there was a fairly distinct knock in the wall, which was also heard by a couple of visitors who were present

During this sitting Sid jokingly said, “Well Philip, if you don't answer us, we can just as easily send you away, you know.” Following this remark very little phenomena occurred that evening.

The group abandoned the sitting for the evening, but they decided later that it had been of some value, perhaps more than they had realized at the time. Negative results often have more value than is recognized. For instance, the sitters decided that if someone had been tempted to push the table, he would have done so on this particular evening, especially as there were two visitors present — surely an inducement to perform It could be argued that the "unconscious pushers” were the absent flu-ridden members. If this were so, however.

there would have been no phenomena at all on this evening. But there were rappings, knockings in the wall, and table movements, even though of a weaker character than usual

Was it possible that, apart from the absence of members of the group, and the depletion of physical energy among those who were present but in indifferent health, the group was getting a little ''stale?" Perhaps it was time for a change, or for some revitalization of the situation. Some of the members had met with considerable scepticism from friends to whom they had related what had been happening Was this taking away their own confidence, and thus weakening the phenomenon? Perhaps the threat to Philip displayed a wrong attitude? Zolar points out in his book, *The Encyclopedia of Ancient and Forbidden Knowledge* , in a chapter on thought forms, that these "artificial entities" as he calls them, can be destroyed as easily as they are created by thought positively directed This opinion was also at the basis of much of the philosophical reasoning behind Batcheldor's theories. Perhaps the group was unconsciously destroying Philip. They decided that the next sessions would be spent in confidently recreating Philip, and making him into a more positive personality. They would devote more time to communication and to the establishment of his life and times. They realized that positive and expectant thought were absolutely necessary to keep the phenomena "alive."

7.
More *Physical Phenomena*

After our experiences with the heavier wooden tables, we decided to go back to using the original plastic-top table which belonged to Al. We had been extremely successful in filling out Philips story, to the accompaniment of rappings which either agreed or disagreed with the suggestions made to Philip by the various members of the group. In addition to the rappings there were the table movements — rocking, sliding, waltzing motions. There were, however, some additional phenomena which were very interesting.

Sue is allergic to cigarette smoke and dislikes being in a room where other people are smoking. Some of the members of the group are smokers, the others who are not are tolerant of those who are. When Sue was present, in answer to the question — "Do you [Philip] like smoking?" — The answer was no. If asked the question when an ashtray was on the table, it was possible that the table would tip up on two legs and the ashtray would be deposited into the offender s lap. This happened if Sue was in the room, even if she was not sitting at the table at the moment. But if Sue was not present, in answer to the question, "Do you mind us smoking, Philip?" the answer would be two raps, no, and the ashtrays would remain on the table.

Occasionally exception was taken to the microphone taped underneath the table to record the raps. When creaking

groaning sounds, and stress noises were heard coming from the table, the microphone would frequently fall off. When glasses full of lemonade were placed on the table, for no apparent reason the table tipped, spilling the lemonade. Sometimes when following a particular person across the room the table behaved quite violently, careening across the Boor with two legs off the floor, then thumping them down and raising the other two, like a bucking bronco. This amused the group very much. On one occasion the table literally chased Dorothy across the floor, leaving the rest of the group behind, helpless with laughter, Dorothy squeezed through the doorway, and the table got itself wedged in the doorway. Only two of the group were anywhere near the table when this took place, and the table had escaped all hands.

On another occasion Philip was told to "go upstairs and see what George is doing. Give him a knock." Three or four other members of the society were occupying the room upstairs, sitting quietly talking. Suddenly there came a very loud thump from underneath their feet. All of them were conscious of this thump, but some of them said they felt it as a vibration. The floor of the room they were in is part of the ceiling of Philip's room. The group in Philip's room did not hear the thump. They were conscious, however, that vibration or energy had left the table.

On another occasion, the special light, which had never given any trouble at all, and which was firmly plugged in the wall, flickered at certain times when questions were being asked, instead of when raps were being given in reply. It had been suggested to Philip the previous week that he try some new ideas, and so the group asked if he was responsible for the light flickering. He rapped affirmatively. Later in the evening, when it was time to go, one of the group suggested, "Flick the light again if you wish to say good night." Where upon the light again flickered. This light had never been unstable previously, nor has it been so since.

In late October, Andy invited the rest of the circle to her

home for a Halloween party. It was a costume affair, and wives, husbands, and friends were invited. Everyone had a wonderful lime. Just before going home the group cleared a small coffee table, and putting their fingers on it, asked Philip if he had been with them at the parry He rapped affirmatively and answered some of their questions The raps were clearly heard by most of the other friends present.

In November a film crew from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation came io the house. They were filming for a CBC program "Man Alive." and as part of their feature they wished to film some shots of a séance. It was felt that it would be a good experience for the Philip group to be filmed, and it would also be a test of whether the phenomena could be produced under such conditions.

The room was somewhat crowded, as it had to include all the sound and camera crew, together with the director and producer Blazing arc lights were placed in the corners of the room. Philip produced the usual phenomena and behaved entirely as if there were no audience present, except that on one occasion, after indicating that the lights were rather bright and hot, one of the group somewhat injudiciously remarked, "If Philip doesn't like the lights, he can put one of them out" (meaning that he could operate the switch and put it out). However, the table promptly took off toward the comer of the room on one leg, as if to thrust the other legs through the light bulbs.

During the January 1974 sessions there were again different movements of the table. On at least two occasions, *one* leg only was raised from the floor, causing some distortion of the table top, as the other three legs were still firmly on the ground. On each of these occasions much force was needed to push the table top down and the raised leg back into place. It felt as if the table was resisting the persons pushing down, and on one of these occasions four people were needed to push the leg down again. Once, when the table had flipped over, as described earlier, the group sat down with their hands

on the exposed underside *of* the table and carried on a conversation with Philip. The raps became audible from the top side, which was lying flush with the carpet.

During this session an experiment was made with the candies which Philip was supposed to like. Usually candies were placed around the table for each member of the group, always with one set aside for Philip. Someone jokingly made a move to take "Philips' candy, telling him to hang on to it. The table was at that moment tipped at an angle of 45 degrees, and the candy stayed on the table. Two or three different types of candy were tried, and care was taken to see that they were not sticky. All of them stayed put. Subsequently the table was tipped manually, and the same candies placed on the table. They slid off almost as soon as the table was tipped, and much before the 45-degree angle achieved by Philip in action.

The group continually tried to persuade Philip to lift the table entirely off the ground, and various effects were produced when this was tried. It seemed almost as if Philip were trying out different methods of lifting the table. Sometimes one leg in turn would rise. Sometimes there would be a curious swirling motion of the table, as if he were trying to spin it off. At times the group felt distortions in the table top itself, which took the form of lumps rather like oranges in size, appearing to rise from the middle of the table, as if Philip were trying to raise the table from the middle of the top. These movements took place in *full light*, with several independent witnesses. At no time was there any possibility that any members of the group could be producing such effects by fraud or trickery. Everyone felt that some force exterior to themselves, unknown to the beholders, was responsible for what was happening. Efforts at duplicating the effects invariably failed

On other occasions, the table made jumping and rocking motions. When these movements occurred, most members of the group felt that for very brief periods all the legs of the table were off the ground. One night this happened three

times when no one's hands were on the table top at all, and each person was sitting with his legs well away from the table. They had had their hands the table, trying to persuade Philip to raise the table up to their hands. As they were resting, the table made two little jumping movements and one rocking movement all by itself

At the end of January 1974 it was decided that a documentary film should be made which would tell the story of Philip, of the sittings, and perhaps capture both the movements of the table and the raps on film.

For the occasion the group moved into a larger room where there was plenty of space for the cameras, lights, and crew. This did not deter Philip, who performed quite happily *for* the cameras, and the results can be seen in the documentary film. *Philip. The Imaginary Ghost* (distributed by George Ritter Films, Ltd., 2264 Lakeshore Boulevard West. Toronto. Canada). After a whole day's filming, and although the members of the group felt rather tired, the phenomena were still occurring. At the end of the evening the table was levitated fully about half an inch from the floor. It floated a short distance, in the presence of two independent witnesses Although there was a cameraman present it was almost impossible to get a shot of this because of the angle. Everyone agreed the table had indeed floated. There were about two dozen loud rappings in answer to questions.

Philip s latest public performance was for a television broadcast. The ‘ group of eight." as they were beginning to call themselves, was asked to take part in a discussion program and to demonstrate their powers before the TV cameras and a studio audience. The two films that had been made previously were done for scientific purposes, but a public television program was somewhat different. Nevertheless, the group, who in no way sought publicity because they did not consider the experiment they were taking pan in was for entertainment purposes, agreed to participate in the program. The society was especially interested in having the broadcast made because

both parapsychologists and scientists were always expressing the desire to have paranormal phenomena audio visually recorded in order to have proof that the phenomena took place. If both the raps and table movements could be recorded by videotape cameras in front of a live audience, this should provide actual proof of the validity of the experiments.

The program was moderated by Rev. Lindsay King of the United Church in Willowdale, a suburb of Toronto, a church at which faith-healing services are conducted. Mr. King is a man with some knowledge and experience in these unusual fields. The other two panelists who were to discuss the Philip phenomena were Dr. George Owen, Scientific Director of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, and Dr. Joel Whitton, a medical doctor and psychologist, who had been associated with the group from its inception in order to study not only the phenomena themselves, but the psychological background necessary for their production. Some of Dr. Whitton's observations and comments will be found in Chapter 17.

The members of the group were on the floor of the studio in front of the dais, on which were seated Rev. Lindsay King and Drs. Owen and Whitton. If 'Philip manifested' himself he could be televised. But Philip turned out to be what the group had already suspected, truly a ham actor. The table quickly started moving and shot around the studio at some speed. It was soon obvious that Philip felt that his place was up on the platform with the moderator and the panelists. The table cried every way to get on to that platform — there were three overhanging steps up to the platform. It took quite a while, and a fair amount of maneuvering before it managed it. The whole procedure was hilarious, and the camera crews succeeded in filming the entire proceeding. Philip had to indulge in some quite complicated positionings with the legs of the table in order to climb onto the platform. Once there, it made straight for the moderator, who was asked by one of the group to say hello co Philip. He looked somewhat doubtful, but did as requested, placed his hand on the table, and said.

"Hello, Philip." He was obviously surprised, as were the television crew and audience, when a very loud rap came in reply right underneath his hand. He continued to ask questions and to receive raps in reply. These were all recorded and filmed. The program was televised over the Toronto City TV system and was broadcast in Toronto, on the program "World of the Unexplained."

The live audience was immensely intrigued and interested. During the question period there was an animated dialogue. It is noteworthy that nobody in the audience who witnessed the phenomenon on this occasion made any suggestions, or asked any questions, which might have intimated that anyone was suspicious of fraud or trickery. Philip's gyrations were accepted at their face value — they took place, whatever their explanation.

Although the group was beginning to understand *how* to get the phenomena working (that is, under what conditions they would operate), they were no nearer to understanding *why* a "joint thought" was able to produce actual physical effects in a table. The scientific implications of this experiment seemed to be enormous. Some of the considerations that arose in the minds of those who took part and witnessed the experiments are dealt with in the chapters that follow.

The Philip experiments are still continuing, and it is hoped that a further understanding of the nature, psychology, and mechanisms of this strange and exciting phenomenon may be forthcoming as a result of them.

8.
Learning a Psychological Skill

In the foregoing chapters we have discussed our decision to conduct a "ghost" experiment, and we have given a factual account of what happened. But *why* did it happen? Can any group of people sitting around in a circle, singing songs, telling jokes, playing music, cause this type of phenomenon to occur? How can one prove that what actually did occur was caused by an unknown energy or force rather than the manifestation of a discarnate entity? And if it was a discarnate entity, is it possible for any group to call up any kind of personality they choose? These and many other questions occurred both to the sitters as well as to those who witnessed the experiments.

We shall try to answer some of these questions in the ensuing chapters. As we have said, the experiments arc ongoing. New and different phenomena are manifesting themselves, and members of the group are beginning to feel that they have more understanding of them. There are still, nevertheless, a number of fundamental questions unanswered, and some of them may take much time and effort to answer.

Let us devote some attention to the psychological background necessary within the group to create the phenomena It does appear that a special psychological approach is essential in the creation of physical phenomena of the kind described, and that just any group of people, silting around "cold." so

to speak, would have very little chance of success. Many experiments of this type have been tried with no results. From our experience and observation over a long period of time it is dear that certain conditions are necessary.

It will be remembered that the group did not actually get results until they adopted the procedures suggested by reading the articles by Batcheldor, Brookes-Smith, and Hunt, and guessed that here lay the key to their earlier lack of success. Unwittingly, however, they had already gone some way along the road toward preparing themselves for results, especially during the period when they had been using meditation methods. During the initial year of experimentation the group had developed a complete rapport, resulting not only in bonds of deep affection and friendship but also in an ability to relax completely in each other's presence They had also, during that year, built up a composite image of the personality on whom they were attempting to focus. In other words, they possessed a common goal, which they all clearly recognized. Also, by virtue of the fact that they were all dedicated parapsychological researchers of some years' standing, they enjoyed a common motivation. They were anxious as a group to prove the truth or falsity of the particular theory on which they were working. Being open-minded and well-read people, they were able to believe that they might be able to create some form of paranormal phenomenon. Unlike many investigators they were willing to approach the experiment with a lack of prejudice.

In the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* of June 1973, Colin Brookes-Smith quotes at length Batcheldor's theories on the production of physical phenomena in a group situation. He also gives reasons why he believes it works. According to him, the whole thing is based on the right psychological approach to the problem. Basically, the essentials, as laid down by the English investigators, are as follows:

One must be able to accept the fact that paranormal phenomena are happening without expressing, inwardly or

outwardly, astonishment or disbelief A skeptical attitude of astonishment or disbelief when something paranormal appears to happen can effectively stop the phenomena. Thus, the relaxed atmosphere of the Victorian-type séance setting helps to dispel this scepticism, and the phenomenon appears to be a completely natural thing under these circumstances.

Since within the group there is no one person designated as the medium, and thereby made responsible for the happenings, there has to be an alternative focus of attention. Even then, some members of the group are liable to assume, albeit unconsciously, ownership or responsibility for the phenomena. This feeling of individual ownership or responsibility for the phenomenon inhibits its manifestation. Brookes-Smith states that the way to deal with this is to personalize the table, addressing it as if it were a sentient entity. Batcheldor's group was not interested in anything more than producing some phenomena and did not at any time have a medium or a communicator present through whom the phenomena might be expected to come. This possible difficulty was overcome quite naturally by our Canadian group from the start of the experiment, as Philip was recognized as being responsible for the phenomena

Coin Brookes-Smith also stares that one must work in an atmosphere of 'heightened expectancy," in other words, there must be belief and expectation that the phenomena can happen, and there must be no surprise or astonishment indicated when it does happen. The Canadian group largely fulfilled these psychological conditions. The following quotation is taken from the Brookes-Smith article. (June 1973, Vol. 47. No. 756. p. 72).

> Psychokinesis — which is the production of paranormal physical phenomena— is a kind of paranormal skill' which appears to be subject to the laws of learning. If, in the long run, this proves to be true it marks a new epoch in the field of scientific research. Simple procedures have to be followed. As with all professional skills,

whether in playing games, or musical instruments, success is achieved by a combination of learning, example, practice, aptitude, and experience. A step-by-step advance from simple and more plausible PK tasks is indicated. Belief and expectancy then 'snowball.' There seems to be no reason why a whole range of paranormal effects should not be induced for ex pen menial purposes, though the 'elusiveness factor may have to be taken into account in the instrumentation methodology.'

This last sentence may need a measure of interpretation. The British researchers had. without doubt, arrived at a well- reasoned explanation of the need for acquiring "psychological skill*' in the group production of physical effects They had not. however, at the time of writing entirely dispelled, in their own minds, the necessity they felt for producing the phenomena in semidarkness or in a dim light; hence, their need for elaborate instrumentation to monitor the effects they were producing. The Canadian group had from the start determined to produced its phenomena in as much light as possible, certainly sufficient for filming, videotaping, and sound recording. In other words, there was no need for instrumentation to prove that the table moved. The element of "elusiveness'" no longer had to be considered, since the table movements could *be seen and photographed by anyone who cared to do so.*

Our group believes that the psychological conditioning which enabled them to produce the Philip phenomena is as follows.

First of all, they were motivated to produce the results. As investigators they were open-minded and were prepared to believe that the results *could* be produced. They were able to produce the "feeling of heightened expectancy" to which Batchelder and his associates referred. Working as a group they came to enjoy a complete rapport with each other. They also had a clear idea in their minds of the personality of the communicator they were seeking to materialize. This, they felt, was vitally important. Individual deviations from their

"Joint" interpretation of Philip's story and character would definitely inhibit the production of the phenomena Indeed, as the experiment proceeded, they had definitely proved to their own satisfaction that if the group-thought-project ion became hesitant, the raps in response also became softer and more hesitant. They came to recognize this so clearly that they dubbed the phenomena "PK by committee."

There was a definite correlation between the affirmation in the group mind as to the desirability of a specific question being put to Philip and the loudness of the raps, which seemed geared to the actual affirmative or negative nature of the response. They also came to recognize that having by chance decided to limit their conversation with Philip to questions requiring a yes or no answer, they had also helped the production of the phenomena. If Philip had to spell out answers to questions in full, both we and he might well have got bogged down in such trivia as spelling mistakes, or variations in wording of an answer, even while the "group mind" was attempting to give a correct "collective" answer. This could have destroyed the whole atmosphere and perhaps have fragmented the rapport. This is probably what happens in many Ouija board sessions, some of which bear a remarkable similarity to the Philip experiment.

To return to the psychological background — the group had motivation and expectancy. Over the year of meditation they had trained themselves to relax in each other's company, so that when they came to try the different techniques they were able to create an atmosphere of harmony. This was more than just a "good friends" feeling; the group members have come to regard themselves as a family, and they behave together very like a closely knit family.

A significant psychological asset was the fact that they had created together a "personality " who could become the focus of their attention, and even more important, that they could ascribe to this "personality" the production of the phenomena, so that no one needed to be bothered about the question

of who or what produced the phenomena. Philip was held entirely responsible, and it was remarkable how quickly the members took to addressing the table as Philip. Even visitors were able to do this with a minimum of self-consciousness — and remarked how very natural it seemed for them to do this. Other members of the society who entered the room while events were in progress commented also on how natural it all seemed, and how only after they had left did they realize how absurd it really had been to be addressing a table as Philip, and not only expecting, but apparently getting sensible responses.

Thus, the group had been able, over a period of time, by patience and learning, to produce the right psychological climate stated by Batcheldor et al., to be essential for the production of phenomena. And thus the phenomena did occur.

To return to the questions asked at the beginning of this chapter: we proved that it does require the learning of special psychological skills in order for a group to be able to produce paranormal physical phenomena, but that these skills are such that any well-intentioned group can learn them. It takes time anti energy to devote oneself to the development of these skills, and their acquisition by the Philip group was not merely a fortuitous experience but proved to be an interesting example of one way in which H was done.

There are, of course, many people and many organizations who claim to teach one how to "control*' one's own mind, how to develop one's own powers of ESP. even to perform faith healing. Most of these use some form of hypnosis. suggestion, or self-hypnosis, during which state one concentrates on the problem at hand, and is thus alleged to acquire the designated ability.

There are also many instruments and methods devised to test the particular state of one's mind at any given moment; for example, to allow one to discover whether one is in a state of alpha or beta rhythm, or whether erne's emotional state is such as to cause anxiety or apprehension. Most of these methods

and instruments have a somewhat hit-and-miss quality, and most of them also seem to involve the expenditure of varying sums of money.

It is difficult to describe a state of mind. Individuals differ in how to describe a state of mind. In the Philip experiment this was especially difficult to describe because the essence of it was that one should *not* concentrate The core of learning this psychological skill is in the ability to relax, to put the assigned task so one side, and then to hope chat when the proper state of relaxation is acquired, the desired happening will occur. A helpful analogy is to consider the experience one often has of needing to remember a piece of information, a name or a place. The more you concentrate upon trying to remember, the less likely you are to remember it. The usual solution is to say to yourself, "1 will put that at the back of my mind, and it will come to me." Then, perhaps in a few minutes, perhaps an hour or so later, the name flashes into the mind. One has *momentarily* concentrated, then put the matter aside, and relaxed the mind.

All this leads to speculation about one's ability to learn psychological skills, and to wondering about the type of psychological skills we have acquired and that we use naturally in our day-to-day life. The psychological skill we use most frequently is the ability to go to sleep. Sleep is a psychological state of mind, and the ability to go to sleep is the expression of a psychological skill.

How do we learn to *go* to sleep? The immediate reaction to this question is likely to be that we do not learn. Sleep, we say, is a natural state, innate in human nature which we exercise as soon as we are born. But we would dispute this. Sleep may be easily and naturally acquired by some people, but there are many more, especially those with families, who would claim definitely that many of us *have had to learn to go to sleep.* We are not talking here about acquiring habits of regular hours of sleep, or the ability to sleep at certain designated and convenient times, but about the ability to compose one's

mind in such a psychological state that one can sleep. While it is true that if one is mentally or physically exhausted, one can usually fall asleep much more readily. It is equally true, however, that most of us, having acquired the psychological skill, can full asleep when we are neither physically nor mentally exhausted, if the conditions are right. Exhaustion is not the operative factor in learning to go to sleep.

We all know people who cannot sleep unless the room is dark, or light; or who cannot sleep if there is noise, or unless they can hear traffic. Some need a hot drink at bed time, or their bed must face north, or south; the windows must be open or closed, the room warm, or cold, and so on In other words, it seems to be evident that a predetermined state of mind must exist before the sleep process can begin. The state of mind is induced by the physical and psychological state of the person and by his or her degree of relaxation if the right conditions are present.

This psychological conditioning or learning process starts shortly after birth The baby is fed before being laid down to sleep; he is made comfortable, warm and dry. Quiet and soothing conditions are created around him. Many babies find it impossible to condition themselves for sleep without holding a favorite object, a toy or blanket. This need may continue for several years until the child learns to produce the right state of mind for sleep. Some children need to have a set routine to induce this state of mind — what might be called signposts to sleep. Nearly all young children have a hath, a hot drink, a story read, a song, a teddy bear to cuddle, the blinds drawn, a ceremonial good-night kiss from mother and father. If any one of these accustomed "signposts" is omitted, the child may find it impossible to produce the necessary relaxation, and thus, "can't get to sleep." Perhaps we do not always understand that a child is acquiring just as much of a psychological skill in learning to go to sleep as he is a physical skill in learning to feed himself. If this was understood, there would be less inclination to label a child naughty who insists

on his ritual. 1le needs his signposts.

Speculation such as this, on the acquisition of a psychological skill in order to produce sleep, led us to understand more fully the importance of the process of learning the special psychological skill needed to produce the physical phenomena of the Philip experiment. The state of relaxation necessary for the physical phenomena is very similar to the relaxed pre sleep state of mind. It seems not insignificant that many poltergeist disturbances, particularly noises (we regard the Philip experiment as, in essence, a controlled poltergeist experience), arc reported as happening during that period of time when the subject around whom such events arc centered is either in a state of being ready to go to sleep or is just waking up It is also significant that poltergeist happenings arc not reported to occur when the subject is soundly asleep.

Other random thoughts come to mind in regard to this acquisition of a psychological skill. One only realizes (hat one has acquired it by the results produced. When one has acquired the right state of mind to produce sleep, then one falls asleep. Many people who have become skillful at this claim they can shut their eyes and sleep instantaneously — Winston Churchill always had this ability. Similarly, when attempting to produce physical phenomena, one is not aware that one is in a special state of mind, but when the right state has been reached, the phenomena occur. Nevertheless, with continual practice, just as one can realize that one's mind is not ready for sleep, so one can also learn to realize the moment when one's mind is in the right state for production of psychic phenomena. Many people with psychic abilities other than that of producing physical phenomena have described this to us and have indicated that with continual practice they can recognize when they have acquired the particular "mind feeling" that will produce the desired results.

It must be said, however, that although the group feels sure they can describe *under what conditions* these phenomena can be produced, what psychological training seems to be

necessary, and what state of mind the sitters must be in to produce results, they are still as far away as ever from understanding *uhy,* when these conditions arc present, physical phenomena are produced. It is important from a research point of view to state also that each member of the group is not personally aware of any psychological, physical, mental, or other change in himself or herself when these things are happening. At various times they have wondered if they themselves were necessary co the functioning of the group, as they feel they contribute nothing. *Generally speaking* the group arc not tired at the end of a session — although certainly during some of the summer sessions when it has been hot. they have felt fatigued Also, since they are all working people and the sessions are held in the evenings, often some members at least are tired before they begin, and sometimes all are. But since this part of the book is in relation to the psychological back ground of the experiment, the observation is meant to emphasize that the participation in the experiment does not make them mentally tired, or "drain their energy", as is so often alleged happens in this field of work. The mental effect is more of exhilaration, even if they are physically tired.

9.
The Composite Personality of Philip

It should be said that the experiment was at all times observed and monitored by Dr. Joel Whitton, a medical psychologist (who contributes a chapter to this book), and by Dr. George Owen, who is Scientific Director of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research. Dr. Owen is an expert on poltergeist phenomena, and he was able to give much guidance and help co our group. Both of these observers were, needless to say, well accepted by Philip, and both became honorary members of the group, always free to take part in discussions and to ask questions to which, as a rule, they received the same type of responses from Philip as the rest of the group. At times when they asked questions, without actually sitting in the circle with the group, they received answers from Philip.

Philip, or if you prefer, the table, did seem to possess personality characteristics which were not those of any *individual* member of the group. His personality was a composite one. The personality manifested was, obviously, that which the group as a whole had decided to project. When another group of the society started a new experiment, with a completely different personality projection — Lilith, a heroine of the French Resistance movement during the World War II, who was shot as a spy — the group managing this experiment obtained the same type of physical phenomena as Philip produced, but the personality of Lilith was composed

and complemented by the members of that group. In other words. Lilith emerged precisely as the kind of personality that the new group, as a whole, had created for her.

Philip's personality reminded those of us who had had experience with poltergeist phenomena of the 'mischievous spines" alleged to be responsible for poltergeist outbreaks. (More about this will be discussed in Chapter II.) Philip manifested moods and temperaments that were clearly obvious to the sitters, as well as to visitors and to observers. For example, at times there would be a flurry of small raps, which could easily be interpreted as laughter, there would be scratchings on the underside of the table because of questions that were not well phrased or which were obscure to him, or because of questions he did not understand or could not answer. If the group ignored him, or forgot his existence, as we have already pointed out, there would be a series of definite little knocks, as if someone was trying to say, "Don't forget I am here." And when there was any hint, either from a remark or from the general feeling of the group, that they wanted to send him away, the table would go lifeless and "dead."

Further aspects of Philip's personality were shown in the way he responded to his favorite songs, by beating time to them and especially to the drinking songs. When Dorothea, his unloved and cold wife, was mentioned, the raps would be hesitant and thin. In the table movements, too, Philip showed signs of a personality of his own when chasing one of the members around the room, or by tipping objects off the table if he did not want them. By these and other actions it became obvious that he had become a real personality to each member of the group, as real as any living person.

But *who* was he? The group realized intellectually, of course, that there had never been a real Philip, that he had never existed as an actual historical character, and that the substance of his yes and no answers to questionings concerning his life and times bore this out. The group knew well enough char Philip was an imaginary ghost, a product of their

joint mental creation. He was the product of their own group mind, the expression of their shared subconscious feelings and emotions — but it is not easy to prove this to the sceptical outsider. The group was absolutely sure at all limes that he was not a disembodied spirit, or even some mischievous spirit who had decided to play a prank by assuming the nature and personality of an invented character.

As the experiment proceeded, and the weeks went by, they were able, with the help of Dr. Whitton, to identify not only the obvious personality traits hut even the less manifest indications that Philip was a composite manifestation of their own subconscious feelings, wishes, and thoughts. This realization dawned gradually, as the sittings progressed. Perhaps, if this realization had come earlier, they might have had much more difficulty in producing (he phenomena. They had achieved, among themselves, a degree of mutual confidence and respect for each other that permitted them to be perfectly relaxed, even childlike in their faith in the real existence of Philip as a personality, at the very least as an object of their experimentation. At no time did they believe that Philip was a disembodied spirit. Thai Philip was a product of the joint thoughts and imagination of the group can be illustrated by the following examples.

The most striking aspect of Philip's composite personality was exhibited by the erratic nature of the responses received by the group to questions they asked and for which they had not yet decided on an answer in their own minds. In answer to such hesitant questions, instead of a firm answering rap, such as was received in response to questions concerning which there was no doubt that what was required was a firm answering yes or no, they received either a hesitant rap or no rap at all, or scratchings. There were a few occasions when the members of the group, in their discussions, changed their minds about the answers expected, in which case an original one rap would he followed two or three seconds later by two raps. Sometimes an initial no answer might be followed by a

little flurry of knocks, presumably manifesting a subconscious or even conscious change of opinion in the minds of the group; and then finally by a single rap if the group made up its mind that yes was to be the answer.

Another interesting aspect of Philip's personality was that he changed this basic response to certain questions to suit the composition of the group sitting on any particular evening. Individual members had many opportunities of observing this, as there was a period during the autumn of 1973 when various members of the group were absent from the meetings due to minor illnesses. Each week, therefore, the composition of the group would be slightly different. We have already mentioned how Philip changed his attitude toward smoking, depending upon whether or not Sue was present. Similarly, his attitude toward the choice of songs would vary. Bernice did not care too much for some of the noisy songs the group liked to sing. In a smaller group her preference would prevail with Philip, giving firm no's to suggestions that a drinking song should be sung. Even when questioned, "Do you like singing?" he would often answer no.

Sid, as the youngest member, was held in great affection by the group, and this was evident in Philip's behavior. Sid was sometimes late in arriving because he had to work later than the others. The moment he entered the room, the table would invariably rush toward him.

There were some deep psychological implications in the behavior of the table. As the sitters began to understand the psychological skill required to generate the physical phenomena, they started to realize that their behavior was regressing to what Dr. Whitton referred to as a "childlike creativity."

According to Dr. Whitton, "The adult in such a situation says, These things cannot happen." But the child says, 'I want them to happen, so they *will* happen." " Acquiring this "childlike creativity was, in a sense, like acting the part of a child, but it had to be *real* acting, consciously motivated, not just saying the words and going through the motions. During the

sessions (he group did become, to a certain extent, childlike in their responses to Philip, to each other, and to Drs. Whitton and Owen, Immediately when the sessions were over, and the skill was no longer needed, they reverted to their normal adult selves. But during the sessions, they had to act out this childlike response. This accounts for what we interpreted as the childlike attributes in Philip's personality — the play with the candies, attempts to hold on to his candy, the chasing, and the love of jokes.

Dr. Whitton observed that during these sessions the group became like a family of children, with various identifiable sibling relationships; Dr. Owen was the father figure, and Dr. Whitton himself formed an elder brother relationship. In this situation subconscious thoughts, feelings, likes and dislikes, could be expressed in a family way, which each member might find difficult to do in an adult situation where the people concerned might be close friends, but not family. This opinion was voiced by several members of the group afterward when asked to comment on their thoughts of the Philip experiment. (See chapter 16). They stated that as a result of their association with the others, they felt their relationships with other people had improved; they found it easier to get on with other people and to express their own personalities more openly. The psychological effects of the experiment on the members of the group indicated some correlation with group-therapy situations, although this had neither been intended nor expected.

The Philip group believes firmly that Philip is truly a child of their own creation. *Their* Philip could only manifest his personality in all its complexities to them, just as the group that has created Lilith evokes a different kind of personality response from their "joint voice." If Philip responded to any other group, in the form of rapping or movement, he would without doubt evince different personality traits.

Group projecting might well offer one explanation for the traditional ghost story. The historical ghost behaves just

as one expects that it should, even to the idea of Ann Boleyn carrying her head tucked underneath her arm. The family ghost in the haunted mansion appears always on the same staircase, in the same dress, and with the same expression, points in the same direction, because the family members all know that this is just as it should be.

If this is one explanation for the haunting ghost, especially for one which has appeared for some considerable time, it might also explain why, in certain cases, the family request for a prayer service or for an exorcism to put the ghostto rest often works. Just as when one member of our group threatened to send Philip away, the faith or belief engendered within the group of their ability to project him was weakened or destroyed temporarily, and Philip responded no more. In this situation what the mind can create, it can also, when it wants to, destroy.

10.
What is the Nature of the Physical Phenomena?

Having discussed the psychological background necessary to produce physical phenomena in response to a group-thought activity, we come now to the core of the problem — what is the nature of the physical force at work? How does it happen? How can group-thought, however strong and motivated, transform itself into a physical force that can be heard and recorded? Is it a new force, previously unknown to science? Or a variation of an old force? Can it be brought under conscious control? If so. can it be harnessed in any way?

The group members were the first to admit that although (hey are quite certain that no one sitting at the table was pushing or pulling it during the sessions, especially when the table was moving around the room, it was difficult for anyone watching the phenomena to be completely convinced that no one was responsible for the table movements but the table. Separate experiments were undertaken, as already reported, to try to guide the table movements manually, but it was found impossible to reproduce or duplicate the movements deliberately. Unless one has tried to do this, it might otherwise be impossible to refute absolutely to the satisfaction of a detached outside observer any allegation that the table is being pushed or pulled. The rappings, however, provide a definitely demonstrable phenomenon. Therefore, we will concentrate, in (his chapter, on the rappings.

1 lore you have a group of people standing around a card table on a carpeted floor, in full light, with their hands resting lightly on the top of the table in full view of anyone who wants to see, with everyone completely still — and even as an observer you hear and feel loud rappings from within the table. These can be heard by everyone present and are tape-recorded. It is difficult to see how such effects could be produced by trickery or by fraud, whether conscious or unconscious.

The investigators themselves are quite certain that conscious fraud is out of the question, but people reading this book do not know the investigators personally, and so have to be assured of their scientific attitude. Since any visitor to the sittings can he asked to join in by placing his or her hand on the table to ask a question, and receives a reply that apparently comes from immediately under his or her hand, the possibility of fraud is obviously reduced to a minimum.

As has been mentioned, the members of the group once spent considerable time recording all the noises they could make on and around the table that could resemble raps. They tapped with thumbnails, small objects, rings, bracelets, belt buckles, etc. Foot and knee tapping can be ruled out, for reasons already explained; the group is often standing up when the rapping occurs and the floor of the room is thickly carpeted. The tape recording confirmed what the group already knew, namely that the quality and tone of the raps from Philip are different from any other kind of noise they could make. The sitters became quickly accustomed to recognizing the different types of rap, and should a knuckle or finger tap accidentally, they would immediately say, "That wasn't Philip."

The raps came from any part of the table, they were not confined to any one area. Most interesting of all, on those occasions when the table completely flipped over, the sitters, by placing their hands on its underside, maintained communication with Philip—the raps then apparently coming from the topside of the table which was in complete contact with

the floor, the underside being uppermost. This situation must dispel, once and for all, any suspicion that the raps could possibly be produced by anyone tapping on the underside of the table.

To the members of the group, as well as to investigators who have witnessed the phenomena, the question of why the raps are produced is most baffling and intriguing. The raps are loud enough to be heard at a distance from the table and have been tape-recorded. The question of mass hallucination or group hypnosis, or of the noise of the raps being a subjective impression, cannot be maintained. There are *real* noises. So the problem that presents itself is — how docs a real noise in the form of audible rapping make itself heard as a result of a thought? is it the fact that it is a *group-thought.* as we believe it to he, or is it a poltergeist outbreak, which is usually the result of *one person's* thoughts?

Our belief is that the two experiences, the Philip phenomena and poltergeist disturbances, are similar. We will concentrate here on the production of the raps and leave the discussion on poltergeist phenomena to a later chapter.

It is worth emphasizing that the members of the group are not conscious of any particular emotional or psychological reactions that might account for the phenomena. Apart from their excitement and interest as a group, they are not aware of the output of any special physical energy, and they have schooled themselves to show no particular surprise or emotion during the time that the raps are occurring. In fact the general feeling, even now, is of mild surprise each time they continue to function together and to produce the raps. A remark that is often made by mediumistic and psychic people is that each rime they try to do something psychic, they wonder if they still have the power. If would not surprise these people to wake up one morning to find that they could no longer produce the effects. The members of the group feel the same way, and they are at a complete loss to account for the phenomena.

Further experiments are even more baffling, because it

was found recently, on three occasions during one evening, when the group told Philip to go and visit one of their members who was at home ill. chat this particular member heard a loud rap, either in her room, *or* in her bedstead, at the time the group asked Philip to make his visitation. This is a very recent experiment, and much more experimentation remains to be done on the possibility of conscious control of the phenomena. The implications of success in this field are somewhat awe inspiring. If the same energy or force which causes raps within a table to respond to group questioning can be directed to produce similar phenomena at some distance away, there seems no limit to the uses of such powers.

Practically no experiments have been done, as far as we are aware, up until this time, on the physical causes of the raps that are heard in mediumistic circles or in poltergeist cases. In a private communication, Dr. Alan Gauld, a psychologist at the University Of Nottingham, England, and a member of the British Society for Psychical Research, said that in a séance circle about twenty years ago, the rappings were analyzed, and the sound prints that were obtained differed radically from an ordinary knock. They seemed to show that in a mediumistic rap the sound built up gradually into a crescendo, whereas an ordinary rap started at its fullest amplitude and died away. We hope to have Philips raps analyzed for comparison.*

The group noticed from the beginning of its involvement with this experiment that the raps built up in intensity. In fact the initial raps in a sitting are not usually heard but *felt,* as a kind of vibration within the table top. As the sittings continue the raps become loud enough to hear Perhaps each individual rap builds up from a small vibration into a loud noise. Possibly each rap starts with the movement or vibration of molecules within the table top until the disturbance is strong enough to produce noise. At this stage we can only speculate.

Many experiments have been suggested that might be done to determine the nature of the force involved, and currently

* The rapt have now been analyzed, and the result] of this analysis are to be found in Appendix 3

physicists in many University Departments are attempting to arrive at some understanding of this force. We hope that many other researchers will duplicate our own experiment and exchange ideas with us on further work that can be done The Toronto Society for Psychical Research intends to pursue this work.

It seems now that we have a repeatable experiment that can be done under good laboratory conditions. We have an opportunity to find some answers to questions that have puzzled parapsychologists for almost a hundred years.

Speculation as to the nature of the force and the possible uses that could be made of such a force, should it be feasible as we have surmised, for any group of people to train themselves to produce these effects, is awe-inspiring It is likely that the force produced to make the raps is of the same kind that produces the poltergeist force, albeit at a much weaker level. Experience is showing that as the experiment continues, the force increases rather than decreases, and new variations appear more frequently. At this stage we have no idea as to the potential of the force that could be released. As the reader may be aware, in poltergeist cases extremely heavy objects may be moved, and the forces exerted during a poltergeist outbreak may be very considerable. If the members of our group could tram themselves to build up to the level of some of these poltergeist forces, a very powerful force would then come under their conscious control.

Comparison may be made of the effects produced by Phi lip with those produced in a poltergeist outbreak, or with those produced by Madame Mikhailova (nee Kalugina), the Russian woman who is alleged to be able to move small objects by willpower alone Madame Mikhailova is supposed to have acquired her ability by a special form of individual training subsequent to her having been a center of poltergeist phenomena, and as with the Philip group, this ability rates as a "psychological skill." She only moves objects, and there are no reports, as far as we are aware, of rappings or movements

of the table, There are no reports of a communicator of any sort being responsible. The communicator, in our case Philip, is only a device for removing the feeling of ownership of the phenomena from the individual members of the group.

In a poltergeist outbreak, objects are not only moved but there also occur rappings in walls, bedsteads, etc., and scratchings of furniture. Other phenomena include lights switching on and off and cold breezes being felt. One hot summer evening, when the group decided to have a meditation session, their meditation was conducted to the sound of waves breaking on a shore, and during this sitting cool breezes, seemed to be generated around the top of the table. These were actually felt by two visitors who came into the room toward the end of the sitting, and who were asked to put their hands on the top of the table and say what they felt. They said that it felt as if cool breezes were blowing across the top of the table. It was a very warm, still evening, and the basement room in which the session was conducted has only one window, high up, which is kept closed and bolted (for security purposes). This window is also covered by a curtain. There were no places from which a draft might come, and no fans were in this basement at all — since it normally remains at a reasonable temperature

Poltergeist outbreaks usually occur suddenly and out of the blue, and when they begin no communicator or entity is held to be responsible. It frequently happens, however, that after a short lime the person or family plagued by such an outbreak will, perhaps, either blame some person for the happenings or attribute them to "Wee Willie." or, alternatively, to some ghost who allegedly inhabited the house previously. The psychological reaction is to find a scapegoat, and so shift the blame from the possibility that any of the actual people present could be involved.

The group commented frequently on the similarity between recorded traditional poltergeist outbreaks and the Phi

lip manifestation. There is a somewhat similar element of practical joking, the tendency to lighthearted and minor mischief. a sense of humor, a flair for the unexpected, and a degree *cf* role-playing, The part that drama, humor, and what one could describe as ham acting play in the creation of such phenomena is very little understood, but it seems probable that these qualities are important ingredients. The group of sitters have likened themselves to a group of comic, custard-pie-throwing actors who need to he trained to give a top rate performance in order to produce the phenomena

If this force is either a variation of or another manifestation of the poltergeist force, we might expect that as time goes on, and if the group can continue to practice and use its newly acquired psychological skills, the point might develop to where heavy objects could be moved at will, and in a controlled situation. Ii will be interesting to see what happens and to what extent the group's abilities can be developed. The continuation of the phenomena should afford much opportunity to study and enable us to come to some understanding of the nature and origin of this strange force. What we want to find out is whether this is truly a new force as yet unharnessed and unrecognized by man, or whether it is a new method of using already known and acknowledged forces.

Various discussions among the members of the team on the nature and application of the psychokinetic force (PK) led to the following speculations. It is worth recording these opinions since they may eventually turn out to have some validity, although at the present time they are merely speculation

During the original group experiments done by members of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, it was felt that if the PK force could be brought under conscious control, it might be harnessed in some way for the benefit of mankind. If people could be trained to consciously move objects, this ability could be of special benefit to invalids, the disabled, and the elderly. As our experience of the phenomena increased,

and we acquired knowledge of the psychological underlay" of the creation of the PK force, speculation increased as to whether this was a realistic ambition.

As further experimentation continued, the members began to realize that just as in spontaneous poltergeist cases, the production of phenomena could be erratic. Discussion and observation led us to believe that even in the group situation, the production of physical phenomena was caused initially by the release of tension. As with the person around whom spontaneous poltergeist phenomena occur, the situation was one of the release of underlying stress. In the group situation there was not sufficient *individual* stress to produce phenomena, but when the members of the group were sufficiently attuned and could experience telepathy, then they could, so to speak, share each other's *subconscious stress and tensions,* and then release them through the medium of physical phenomena.

The result of the Philip experiment, through the continued group experience, has been to produce a therapeutic effect (as will be seen from the individual statements of the members to Chapter 16). At those times when this effect has been apparent to the group members, the phenomenon has been most erratic Two points should be emphasized. First that this is a group of normal people, and second, that any such group can produce this effect. We all, without exception, have underlying stresses and tensions of which we are not aware, and which have no apparent effect on our daily lives. Was the adding together of these stresses the operative factor in the Philip situation?

The phenomena are continuing and changing. From time to time when the group is in a particularly tranquil state, after a period of much activity, the phenomena appear to diminish. As Dr. Owen observed, "We have written Philip s obituary"; then a further period of activity follows. This can be accounted for by the fact that as one set of tensions and stresses are dealt with (and in the course of normal everyday living we are busy collecting another set), a new set will become the new focal

point of the phenomenon It was interesting to notice how these cycles worked. An obvious therapeutic effect was followed by a consequent lack of interest and need for Philip At such times the group meetings would turn more and more into a happy social occasion, and the members of the group found it increasingly difficult to bring their attention back to that special state of awareness of the need for producing phenomena. In the Lilith group the same results were observed, particularly on one occasion when an obvious and expressed cause of tension was removed from the group situation after the phenomena had been produced.

At this particular stage m the group's activities it was obvious that only certain types of reference would generate phenomena, and one had the feeling that under the eyes of a skilled observer, diagnosis could be made of the final tensions yet to be resolved. For instance, a certain normal jealousy situation that had previously brought response, no longer had the same effect, but clearly there were other areas with lingering tensions, enough to keep the phenomenon from completely evaporating

If at any time an unlikely situation could be created, when all the tensions and stresses of all the members of the group were resolved, it is probable the phenomena would evaporate, at least temporarily. The tensions and stresses probably responsible for a good deal of the raps and movements were not consciously apparent to the members of the group. They only manifested themselves as a shared experience. We do not know, nor did we discuss, what kind of stresses produced the best results, or whether it would be necessary for a group to have similar subconscious tensions, or whether "any old tensions will do " What seems to be proved is that the group, as a whole, demonstrated that a shared background of stresses and tensions was sufficient to produce the phenomena. The success of the Philip experiment only came about as the result of a shared experience, and responses were received in answer to questions asked by any member of the group.

The above conclusions lead to further speculation. If these speculations have validity, then the hope of harnessing the PK force in a constructive way seems a pretty slim one, li is taken for granted that practically everyone has tensions of some kind Obviously normal groups would not be able to exercise their psychological ability to produce phenomena for very long, if the experience of learning the psychological skill required to produce the phenomena coincides with the resolutions of the tensions producing it. If this were so, the most profitable period of production of the physical phenomena should be at the beginning rather than at the end of the sessions. We are only hypothesizing here. The production of phenomena is variable in intensity, although we have never yet failed to produce something.

Nevertheless, there remains the possibility of *a* number of practical applications. Psychologists might use similar experiments for diagnostic purposes. Perhaps it could be a means of treatment of mild mental disorders. Let us allow our imaginations to roam farther afield. It is beginning to be accepted that certain types of cancer, and many forms of arthritis, have their origins in underlying stresses and tensions. We realize, of course, that the picture is much more complicated than this; yet this is an accepted medical fact, although the reasons why this is so art nor fully understood.

Dr. Brian Josephson, Nobel prize winner for physics in 1973, wrote the following in a letter, and it made a great impact on us: "There has been a fair amount of discussion in our Theory of Condensed Matter Group lately about psychic phenomena, and the possible existence of fields which do not interact appreciably with ordinary matter, but can affect biological molecules. It turns out that such a possibility is entirely consistent with conventional physics."

Reports of recent work done by scientists at the Strange ways Laboratories in Cambridge, England, indicate that the occurrence of arthritis is in some way related to the activities of a certain enzyme.

Dr. Bernard Grad, of McGill University, Montreal, some six years or so ago, worked with a healer, Mr. Estebany, Wounds were inflicted on mice and experiments done to see whether the wounds on the mice held on the hands of Mr. Estebany healed faster than the wounds of mice that were not so treated. Experiments proved that Mr. Estebany had some healing effect on the mice

This experiment was followed up by Sister Justa Smith, PhD. and Chairman of Biology at Rosary Hill College, Buffalo. She prepared test-tubes of solutions containing enzymes, and experimented with Mr. Estebany holding these. It was found that in those test tubes that Mr. Estebany held in his hands, the activity of the enzymes was changed, in other words he was able to affect the work of the enzymes.

It seems logical to believe that we are dealing with one force, manifested in different ways, when we are talking about psychokinetic events, or faith healing. It is reasonable to assume, at this stage, that like electricity it can manifest itself in different ways.

It is well known that sufferers from arthritis and cancer respond well to faith healing. The conclusion would seem to be that if the psychokinetic force can affect weak fields around biological molecules (which is what enzymes are) that this may be what is happening when faith healers are working. Could one learn to produce this force and in some way be able to heal either oneself or others? This is absolutely *pure speculation,* but surely a speculation worth considering.

Years of research by top scientists and millions of dollars have gone into research on these two diseases alone, and still the answers elude us. Would it be worthwhile to investigate whether the release of underlying tensions in groups, by the production of physical phenomena, could have any special physical effect on the bodies of the persons involved? Could it be (this is the wildest speculation) that individuals, by taking part in group experiences with the avowed object of producing physical phenomena, could reduce their chances, or even

eliminate the chances, of developing cancer or arthritis later in life? As we have already said, all this is *pure speculation,* but the little bits of knowledge we have acquired about the nature of the energy or force we have produced so far seem to fit into each other to create some sort of pattern. We feel this is worth further thought and investigation.

But while speculating on the possible good effects of being able to produce physical phenomena, it is wise also to inject some words of caution. Several people have expressed to us their doubts as to the wisdom of what we are doing, and some of the things they say are valid and must be taken seriously. We do not feel unduly alarmed by those people who are concerned for our mental welfare should we raise a "real" specter, and we do not doubt our ability to cope with this should the occasion arise. Even in the unlikely event that an external entity should materialize, we do not feel that such a ghost would be evil, or cause us harm. But the question of the irresponsible production of physical phenomena could be a very real problem, especially if there was any possibility that this force could inadvertently interfere with intricate machinery, or apparatus. It is well known that in poltergeist situations electronic equipment frequently breaks down inexplicably, tape recorders fail to function, tape spools unwind instead of wind and release miles of tape at the wrong moment.

Jan Merta related to us that during the time he was at the height of his ability to move a feather (the feather being suspended in a sealed glass jar), his television set frequently failed. This was a particularly disconcerting phenomenon, because the set was a rented one. Invariably, as he went eagerly to turn on a favorite program, the set would black out. The company that rented him the set came and investigated several times, and finally discovered that one small resistor burned out at the moment he went to turn on the set. This same young man also told us that he disliked air travel, and avoided it whenever possible. He was worried in case he "inadvertently" caused any trouble with the plane s instruments.

This type of phenomenon is something to be very concerned about. It could happen that a psychic person could cause such an effect. Any member of a group who tries to imitate this experiment should most firmly ' build in" into their psychological conditioning, as the Philip group has tried to do, their desire that nothing will happen outside of the usual meeting place, or without the whole group being present. Even so, during the summer months of 1974 when the Philip group had a rest, individual members of the group reported inexplicable and unusual poltergeist-type happenings in their own homes. These phenomena lead one to ask whether the group should not be meeting to release this energy. If this is a new force, and if it is possible for everyone to find a method of developing it, then these words of warning must be heeded.

This has been a deliberately provocative chapter. It contains much speculation, but this is what parapsychology is all about. It is interesting to trace the paths by which we have come from that original meeting — at which the question was asked. What is a ghost?" — by way of a controlled experiment which now points toward certain new hypotheses.

11.
Comparison with some Poltergeist Cases

Our experience with the Philip phenomena caused us to look carefully once more into some of the old reports of poltergeist outbreaks and similar happenings. The physical phenomena connected with spiritualism was largely ignored because many mediums had been exposed as being fraudulent. Until recently many people professed that poltergeist outbreaks were caused by adolescents playing tricks, rather than admitting to the existence of paranormal events. Another view was that the happenings were caused by a disembodied spirit, although serious investigators found it difficult to believe that a spirit would resort to the playing of such simple cricks. Consequently, little serious research had been undertaken to discover the nature of poltergeist phenomena and many of the old stories were regarded as fictional accounts rather than as actual events.

Even when well-known and such highly regarded scientists as Sir William Crookes and Sir William Barrett (to name only two) testified to the paranormality of the poltergeist events they had witnessed, both subsequent and contemporary investigators seemed to prefer to believe that these scientists were deceived, or even that they were fraudulent. Unfortunately parapsychologists in general have devoted far too much time trying to prove the existence or actuality of the phenomena instead of trying to find out how and why these phenomena

occur There are so many doubling Thomas's, each one of whom won't be satisfied until he puts his fingers into the nail prints, and since scientific investigators in this field are few, they find themselves in the unfortunate position that few of their fellow scientists will believe them. Thus, they have to start all over again, convincing somebody else, instead of following up their initial hypotheses with further experiments.

In defense of the scientists, however, we must say that they have had to contend with a great deal of fraud, deception, and plain self-seeking. This is still true, even now, when there is a tremendous revival of interest in all things '"occult. " Unfortunately, too "the occult" is often still the label with which the science of parapsychology is tagged by the undiscerning public.

One of these old reports of poltergeist phenomena bears reexamination, a situation investigated by Sir William Barrett at Kingstown. County Dublin, Ireland. Sir William's own account is worth quoting in full because it was the means of convening him to the realization that this type of phenomena was indeed genuine. He wrote:

> I thought that where the observers were competent men of unquestioned integrity such as Sir William Crookes, and Professor de Morgan, there would be no question of fraud, but that there might be illusion like that produced in the first stages of hypnotism. My investigations proved to me that the facts completely destroyed my theory.
>
> It was in 1876. An English solicitor, very well-known and respected, Mr. C. had rented for the summer the house of one of my friends, quite near to my own house at Kingstown in the county of Dublin, in Ireland. I laving made his acquaintance I was surprised to learn that phenomena appeared to happen at his house. Mr. C. and his people were not spiritualists. They were perplexed and rather annoyed when the sound of blows and other inexplicable noises were frequently heard in the presence

of their daughter Florrie, a child of ten, intelligent and straightforward. At first they thought, quite naturally, that she was playing some trick of her own on them, hut they were soon convinced that this was impossible. The governess complained of hearing knocks in the school-room every time that Florrie was unoccupied, and the music mistress states that loud blows resounded in the piano whenever the child plays her scales softly.

Mr. and Mrs. C. willingly allowed me to make a personal investigation, and I went to their house (he next day after breakfast. It was ten o'clock in the morning, and the sun was shining. Mr. C., Mrs. C.. Florae. and I sat around a large dining table without a cloth. The French windows which gave on to the lawn let in floods of light, so that the hands and feet of those present were seen perfectly. We soon heard a sort of rubbing, then blows on the table and on the backs of our chairs The hands and feet of Florrie were closely watched: they were perfectly still at the time when the noises were heard. It was as if someone were hammering small nails into the floor, and my first thought was that there were carpenters on the floor above or in the room underneath, but we made sure that there was no one there The blows became louder when we began a cheerful song, or when there was music; they then beat time in a most amusing way and changed into a rhythmical scratching, as if a violin bow were being rubbed on a piece of wood. I placed my ear many times on the exact place from which these sounds seemed to come, and I perceived distinctly the rhythmical vibration of the table without discovering any tangible or visible cause above or below.

The blows changed their directions sometimes and were heard in the far ends of the room One day I asked them to knock on a small table near me, which Florrie was not touching. I was obeyed I then placed my hands one above the other underneath the table, and felt quite

well the light vibration produced by the knocks on the part which I was pressing. Whether Florrie and I were alone or not made no difference. I sometimes got other people to come in while the knocks were going on in order to see if my hallucination theory had any foundation, but everyone heard the noises.

We repeated the alphabet slowly, and the invisible intelligence knocked at each letter required to make an answer to the questions we asked. We learnt in this way that the communicator was a little boy named Walter Hussey Mrs. C. told me later that when she went to say good-night to her daughter she often heard knocks and found Horne chatting animatedly with her invisible comrade by means of this system. I made a note of some of the answers obtained, and they were such that Florrie herself could have made — merry and unimportant, the invisible intelligence corresponding to that of the child, also the spelling.

The sceptic will not fail to say that all this had been concocted by a mischievous child to make fun of a professor. Let him do so! I will content myself in pointing out that, after weeks of thorough investigation, all my theories and those of the friends who had joined in the enquiry forced us to reject with one accord all hypotheses of fraud, illusion, or malobservation. The phenomena were inexplicable, except on the supposition of an invisible intelligence or that of the child herself. But the force used was much beyond Florrie's. Afterward furniture was moved. One day, m broad daylight, her parents and I were sitting at the big mahogany table in the dining room. Twelve persons could easily have been seated at it. Our hands were on the table, well in sight, when suddenly three feet of the table were lifted sufficiently high for me to pass mine under the castors. Anyone who tried to do it with all his force would find that even by grasping the cable, which none of us did, it could not be accomplished

without much difficulty, even by a clever and vigorous man.

On another occasion we heard raps after we had withdrawn our hands and had moved away from the table. While the hands and feet of all were perfectly visible, and *nobody touched the table,* it started moving sideways unequally. It was a heavy four-legged table about four feet square. At my request the two feet nearest to me rose up, then the other two, eight or 10 inches above the ground, and the table remained there for several seconds, while nobody touched it. I moved back my chair and it advanced toward me (nobody touching it) and finally got right in front of my chair, so that I could not leave it. When it was under my nose it rose up several times, and I could convince myself by touch and sight that it did not rest on the ground, and that no human being could be directing its movements. Sceptics are at liberty to suppose that the table was moved by invisible threads worked by an imaginary accomplice who would have had to float in the air without being seen. That was my first experience of physical phenomena. Taken with later ones and ocher testimony they left no doubt in my mind. There is a hidden intelligence behind these manifestations. This is an extraordinary affirmation, which destroys all the foundations of materialism.

I am not so simple as to believe that what I say will impress public opinion m any way, or that my testimony has any more weight than that of other observers. But I hope it will encourage other witnesses to give us the proofs they possess, until we have forced our opponents to admit either that the phenomena exist or to assert that the experimenters lie, trick, or are in a state of blindness and thoughtlessness incompatible with any mental state ocher than perfect idiocy.

Thus wrote Sir William Barrett, F. R. S., almost one hundred years ago. And, as has already been said, many scientists

have spent most of the intervening hundred years declaring that people such as Sir William Crookes, Professor de Morgan, William James. Sir Oliver Lodge, Frederick Myers, and Professor Henry Sidgwick, and many many other distinguished scientists and observers, were either liars, cheats, frauds, or hopelessly deluded — this in spite of their obvious and outstanding abilities in other fields of science and knowledge

We have given the Sir William's account in full, as it is reproduced in *Haunted House* by Camille Flammarion (sec Bibliography) because there are so many similarities between it and the Philip phenomena. It is true that Sir William apparently accepted the authenticity of the boy communicator, Walter Hussey who had died, and ascribed the activities to his spirit. The actual account of the events that happened is almost identical to the kind of phenomena that occurred in the Philip circle, and were ascribed to Philip — but Philip was an invented personality. In hindsight, doesn't Walter Hussey remind one of the well-known phenomenon of childhood — the invisible and loved companion of the lonely child?

It is worth making some comparison between Florrie C.'s Walter Hussey and our group's Philip. The events at Mr. C.'s home took place in bright daylight at 10 AM Philip also could produce his phenomena in bright light — the lights of the television and film cameras did not bother him at all Sir William reports that the volume of noise increased when they sang a song — a phenomenon frequently observed by the Philip group, and like Philip, Horne's table beat time to the tune that "it" obviously enjoyed. Again, it is interesting that the characteristics of personality only emerged, or were created, after the events occurred, thus confirming the idea of the scapegoat personality. In many, many poltergeist-type cases, the identity of the alleged perpetrator of the phenomenon is only made apparent sometime after the original happenings. It is interesting that Horne's Walter Hussey was a child also, with a child's spelling ability, and a child's knowledge of, and

approach to, life The Canadian group has frequently observed that Philip is limited to the joint knowledge and experience of the group in his answers to questions, even when these are outside the range of his own story.

It seems clear that the Canadian investigators have not discovered something entirely new and unknown in the field of parapsychology. The data were all there for a century or more, awaiting further examination and explanation. It is unfortunate that the physical phenomena have been largely discounted while the belief that this type of phenomena could indeed be the outcome of manifestations by dead spirits has grown in some circles. (In Chapter 14 we shall try to put our experiment in scientific relationship to spiritualist belief.)

We said earlier that in mediumistic circles these experiments were conducted in the dark or in subdued light, which often made it difficult to believe in their objectivity, but Florae's phenomena happened in broad daylight. And Florrie was not a medium. What is new about the Canadian experiment, however, is that whereas Florrie, her parents, and Sir William came to believe that the phenomena were caused by the spirit of Walter Hussey, the Philip group *knew* even before the phenomena that their group personality was responsible for the happenings, that they were responsible for its creation, and that Philip had never existed. So, another scientific step forward has been taken.

Sir William Barrett was a good investigator. Another case in the year following that of Florrie centered around a family consisting of a widowed father, a twenty-year-old daughter, Maggie, and three younger girls. The disturbances seemed to be centered on Maggie, and to be inhibited by light. However, perhaps in view of his experience with Florrie, Barren trained the poltergeist to be less bashful by taking a lamp into the bedroom, where Maggie was lying fully dressed and with her hands and feet in full view. The noises died down, but whatever caused the phenomena "got used to the light" (Barrett observed), and raps and noises came from walls, ceiling

etc., in the bedroom Maggie was motionless and the other girls asleep. The closest scrutiny failed to detect any movement on the part of those present that could account for the noises, which were accompanied by a scratching or tearing sound. The communicator in this case seemed to have just been labelled "it," but nevertheless "it" was able to give communication.

Barrett on one occasion asked if "it" would respond by a given number of raps. He said that "it" did answer questions but just as often with lies as truth. Barren says, "Then I mentally asked it, no word being spoken, to knock a certain number of times, and it did so. To avoid any error or delusion on my part, I put my hands in the side pockets of my overcoat and asked it to knock the number of fingers I had open. It correctly did so. Then with a different number of fingers open each time, the experiment was repeated four times in succession, and four limes I obtained absolutely the correct number of taps." This is interesting.

The Philip group has noticed frequently that when an individual member of the group is asking a question, Philip answers before the questioner has finished asking the question. They have attributed this to a flash of menial telepathy around the group, so that everyone is aware of what the question is. Then the answer is flashed out m raps on the table. If this were so, in the case described above, it would mean that there was a degree of telepathic communication between Barrett and Maggie, assuming Maggie was the person responsible for creating the raps. This is not at all unlikely. Barrett had apparently been investigating this case for some time; the reports mention many visits to the household, and a telepathic rapport may well have been built up. The Toronto Society for Psychical Research has done many experiments in telepathy, and it seems that telepathy is more common than most people realize, and also that it is induced easily in exactly the same conditions that predispose to the creation of physical phenomena.

Another very interesting case was reported by Flammarion. The account of this was sent to him privately, and reported the doings of an *esprit frappeur* in a house occupied by a Madame Massot at Grenoble. The owner of the house, Monsieur de Beylie, ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce, investigated in the presence of Central Commissioner Pelatant and Police Inspector Berger. Constables were stationed on the roof, in neighboring rooms, and in the street. The persons present "surrounded" the wall upon which the raps usually came. The raps seemed to be struck from both sides at once, but were produced only in the presence of Alice Cocat, niece of Madame Massot. There was no question of fraud because the girl was watched by those present as the raps were sounding. The wall was only four inches thick and had been inspected by police, professors, and all present. Alice had been engaged for five years to a nephew of Madame Massot; he was twenty-five and an electrician. Apparently the raps, communicating presumably in code, alleged that they came from this same young man, for the account says:

> His description tallies with that furnished by the mysterious rapper. As the raps are not considered as emanating from the spirit of a deceased, hut a living person, they are probably only a function of the faculties of Mlle. Alice.

This case is intriguing for several reasons. First, the statement that the rapper was alleged to be still alive, and not a disembodied or mischievous spirit, is a variation on the usual poltergeist report. It does bear out our theory from the Philip experiment that it is not necessary to have a spirit present in order to produce the raps. It would have been interesting to have a fuller account of the actual rappings, In the Philip experiment we found that the raps, in a completely subtle way, manage to convey not only a confirmation of the person and place but also provide some inkling of the kind of personality of the alleged communicator. It would be interesting to know if any personality characteristics of Madame Massot's nephew

were revealed through her niece.

What is also intriguing is that even though it was completely evident that no fraud was suspected, the observers were getting so near the mark as to realize that in some way the girl herself was responsible for the rappings, which were a product either of her conscious or unconscious mind. The conclusions of these investigators were in no way followed up. Apparently no one realized the enormous implications involved in this seeming ability to transmit mental processes into physical activity. The group of investigators in this case, having thoroughly satisfied themselves that the girl was not tricking them, and also that no spirit was involved, since the alleged communicator was deemed to be still alive, apparently dismissed the matter as of little further interest. This is an example of the dangers of looking only for one particular thing when you are doing research work and ignoring the rest of the evidence. These investigators seem to have been interested only in some possible spirit communicator, and when this was not evident, they had no more curiosity.

Occasionally, in reports of poltergeist cases, an actual voice is heard — apparently coming out of thin air. This voice is of a completely different timbre from that of the normal voice of the person around whom the phenomena centers. This is a very rare occurrence and difficult to understand, but there are some well-authenticated accounts.

There was a very well-attested instance of such a phenomenon which took place m Canada in 1889, in the village of Clarendon, near Shawville, north of the Ottawa River, in the Province of Quebec. The central character was Dinah Bur- don McLean, a Scottish child recently arrived in Canada, who had spent some time in the Home for Orphaned Children, at Belleville, Ontario. At the age of eleven she was adopted by George and Susan Dagg, who maintained a farm at Clarendon, and who had two small children of their own, Susan and Johnny. Shortly after Dinah s arrival, the Dagg farmhouse was plagued by poltergeist activities of the usual kind. The case

aroused the interest of Percy Woodcock, a distinguished artist and a member of the Royal Canadian Academy, who agreed to prepare a report on it for the *Brockville Recorder and Times* He spent two days at the house, and on the basis of a great deal of evidence from the family and neighbors became convinced that the reported phenomena were genuine. But he tried to verify one phenomenon for himself

This took the form of a gruff voice which, people alleged, they had heard speaking to Dinah. Mr. Woodcock took Dinah to a shed at the back of the house where she said she had seen an apparition. Dinah said, "Are you there, Mister?" To Woodcock's extreme astonishment "a deep gruff voice, as of an old man. Seemingly within a four or five foot distance, replied instantly in language which cannot be repeated here." When Woodcock asked who it was, it said, "I am the devil. I'll have you in my clutches. Get out of here or I'll break your neck." The voice also used a good deal of bad language.

Mr. Woodcock examined the shed carefully, and his account insists that there was no place of concealment for a third person. He told Dinah to fill her mouth with water, which she did, but the voice remained unaltered. In any case, it was deep and rough, while Dinah's own voice was exceptionally high pitched. When they returned to the house the voice followed them and maintained a conversation for several hours in the presence of almost twenty neighbors, who had dropped in during the course of the day. Mr. Woodcock made repeated inspections inside and out, of the Dagg's log-built house, and found no place where an impostor could be concealed. During the course of the conversation the voice modified its aggressive tone and became amiable and conciliatory. It apologized for the poltergeist phenomena and said it had caused them "for fun" and meant no real harm. It also claimed that a neighbor, Mrs. Wallace, using the "Black Art," had sent it to plague the Daggs.

At this, Woodcock fetched Mrs. Wallace and challenged the voice to accuse her to her face. Mrs. Wallace argued with

the voice and involved it in several self-contradictory statements, whereupon it lost its temper and burst out plaintively, "Oh, don't bother me so much — you make me lie!" It became conciliatory again, and said it was sorry for its bad behavior It promised that on the next night (a Sunday) it would say goodbye and leave for good. When Sunday came the voice was on its best behavior, but answered questions and made comments on people as they entered the house. Some remarks were humorous and displayed an intimate knowledge of the private lives of the questioners, (In a small village this is, of course, not necessarily paranormal!) The voice claimed. I am not the person who used the filthy language. I am an angel from Heaven sent . . to drive away that fellow." But as time went on the voice changed its character, getting entangled in some of its answers, lost its temper, and said many things out of harmony with its supposed heavenly origin However, it continued until 3 A M., changing character once more, and singing hymns, in a beautiful flute I like voice. It said it had adopted the gruff lone previously to protect Dinah from being accused of impersonating a spirit. Mr. Woodcock seems to have been quite a reasonable investigator, but because this happened a long time ago, when so little was known about these phenomena, it is the sort of story that will probably be dismissed by most people who have read it as a fabrication, or as involving fraud of some sort which Mr. Woodcock had been unable to detect. A modern investigator might look at it with a new understanding.

Let us lay aside for the moment the actual method of communication — the direct voice as opposed to raps — and look at the rest of the story. The voice communicated a personality— in fact, more than one. The scientific explanation is that it was the confused personality of the child herself. Psychologically she certainly must have been a resentful little girl, orphaned, in a strange land, and adopted into a family with other children perhaps more from the motive of acquiring cheap labor, than from any real wish to provide an

orphaned child with love, affection, and a family. After being able to express verbally her resentments, a more amiable and conciliatory personality emerged. The episode with Mrs. Wallace was very revealing when the child, speaking indirectly via the voice, but unable to cope with the more sophisticated arguments of this woman, burst out with “Don't bother me so much — you make me lie!” Later on, the obvious desire to appear a better person and regain favor emerged in the "angel" personality.

However, the actual explanation for the physical production of the ‘direct voice" is extremely baffling, more so than the production of raps and knockings, or the even more spectacular movement of objects, as in many other poltergeist cases. Because the voice is so directly related to human personality, its production in this strange manner is more difficult to believe. Yet if this is a force related directly to human personality, it does not seem more extraordinary than the other types of physical phenomena.

We have talked about these cases to illustrate what we believe to be the relationship between the Philip phenomena and spontaneous poltergeist-type cases. Of course there are many, many accounts of poltergeist disturbances recounted in almost every country in the world, and going back through history, What is significant is how these accounts tally. It is unreasonable, on statistical and common-sense grounds alone, to suppose that they are all the result of deliberate fraud, trickery, or illusion. There has to be another explanation. In the Philip experiment we believe we have advanced a step toward understanding this most baffling and mysterious type of occurrence.

12.
Examples of Hauntings

In the last chapter we gave a few examples of poltergeist disturbances which at the time were thought to be manifestations of discarnate spirits. While by no means discounting the possibility of manifestations by disembodied entities, we now believe that the communications we have been receiving from Philip in our own experiment, and probably in nearly all poltergeist activity, are due to the subconscious personality of the poltergeist person (i.e. the person around whom the phenomena are centered) or to the combined personalities in a group situation.

As the reader will recall, the original aim of the group was to try to produce a visual manifestation of Philip, in other words, to produce a visible and audible ghost or image, which all could see at the same time, and perhaps even photograph. As a result of their persistence and patience, when they were presented with quite a different series of phenomena, they decided. as good researchers will, to concentrate upon what they got and see what they could make of it. They still hope, however, that at a later stage perhaps their original aim may be realized and Philip might materialize in visible form.

We do not know what the relationship between ghost, end poltergeist outbreaks might be. Certainly both forms of manifestation have been known to occur as part of the same event. Often in such cases, following the rappings and the

movement of objects, and particularly when those witnessing the phenomena believe them due to the presence of a spirit or ghost, the apparition of the deceased man or woman is seen by one or more family members.

A common type of ghost story begins with noises and thumpings being heard in what was previously regarded as a peaceful household. Then perhaps small objects (bottles, crockery, etc.) are seen to move through the air. Later, larger objects are seen to move. A table may move from its place against a wall; a chair may float across the room. These incidents naturally alarm the family concerned, and they look for an explanation. Unless they are aware of the existence of poltergeist phenomena, or have some know-ledge concerning this type of happening, they are likely to ascribe the events to a "haunting** and to investigate the history of the house they occupy to see if they can find some person who may have met with an untimely end, and who is therefore assumed to be haunting the house. In old houses it is usually not difficult to unearth some legendary history of unusual events taking place. For instance, there was a modern house in England some years ago where poltergeist-type disturbances were occurring, culminating in the appearance of a ghost. After diligent searching into the history of the house it was discovered that an aunt of a woman who had been the victim of a particularly violent murder about twenty-five years earlier had lived very briefly in the house. This was sufficient for the family to ascribe the visitation to (his murdered person.

In another case, the family was being plagued with unexplained thumps, noises, and ratrlings, and an old picture of a previous owner of the house was found. Subsequent to this discovery, an apparition of this old lady was seen by various members of the household. In this particular instance the family sought the help of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research in coping with their problem. After we had told them of our Philip experiment and talked about some of our theories, and they had gained some insight into how and why we

believed such phenomena occurred, one of them exclaimed. So, maybe whatever picture we had found might have been the apparition that we eventually saw!" She may well have been right. Certainly in this case the family realized what had happened to them, and after this realization, they had no further disturbances.

We should hasten to add, however, that we do not for one moment believe that this one theory accounts for *all* the reports of hauntings, ghosts, and apparitions that one reads about. We believe it's quite possible that a large proportion of such cases could be accounted for in this way. It would be unscientific at this stage, on the basis of one experiment, however plausible it may be. to claim that one has solved completely this very complex: problem of haunting, Neither are we saying, because we believe that in the Philip situation we are dealing with subconscious and unconscious group personalities, that spirits do not exist. Still less are we denying the possibility of any form of existence after death. This is quite another story. These issues are at the moment a matter of personal belief, although there is, so far as we know now, no absolutely experimental or empirical proof one way or the other. We feel, however, that our theory offers a scientifically verified alternative to the accepted belief that spirits of the dead are responsible for all hauntings as well as for poltergeist phenomena. As such, we feel that our theory should be seriously entertained. It can be argued, in the light of our experiment, that what the observers claim to see, if they see anything, is just exactly what they are expecting to see.

The Philip group has not yet managed to conjure up an apparition of Philip himself. This would provide complete proof of our theory in their eyes, and the group is still hoping to pursue this. Whether it can logically expect, given the correct psychological skill, that it will be able to cause the materialization of an apparition which will resemble the group's mental image of Philip, remains to be seen.

We feel also that our theory could account for many stories

of family ghosts that are handed down from generation to generation. The legend of the ancestor, of his or her appearance and clothes, of the time and circumstances of the appearances. become well-known within the family. The picture of the ancestor is probably as firmly fixed in the minds of the family as Philip's image is in the minds of the members of the group. So, it is perhaps not surprising that when the psychological conditions are ripe, or when things are perhaps going badly in the family, the ghost appears. It is interesting to note that such "family ghosts "rarely appear, if ever, to people other than members of the family, and always in their own appointed times and places.

Other types of hauntings, however, can also fit into this explanation. One of the most striking stories of a haunting that was ever related to us is as follows. The person who told us this story had recently moved into a new neighborhood and after a short time she and her daughter became acquainted with the family next door. This family consisted of a mother and two or three daughters, all of whom, our informant tells us, were outstanding in their looks and had red hair and beautiful complexions. The newcomers became very friendly with their neighbors and spent many afternoons drinking tea and conversing with them. They were, however, somewhat puzzled, as they frequently saw a very good-looking, red- haired young man in their neighbor s garden, who would walk the length of the garden to a small summerhouse at the end, carrying books under his arm, and with a sad expression on his face.

As no mention had been made of a son, their curiosity finally overcame them, and one afternoon a few months after their arrival, they asked their new neighbors where their son was We so often see him in the garden, but he is never here in the house "The family became obviously distressed at the remark, and one of the daughters burst into tears and left the room, and the mother asked her guests to please leave. However, the next day she came over and explained that they had

been so upset because the description fitted to exactly her only son, who had died a couple of yean before He had contracted tuberculosis and had been forced to live in the summerhouse. This was before the days of modem drugs, and when the only hope was for the victim to live in the open air. The young man, who was very studious, had subsequently committed suicide to avoid the distress to his mother and sisters of a long and lingering illness.

This is a typical ghost story, in spite of its dramatic impact. The traditional explanation would be that it was indeed the spirit of this dead young man, come back to revisit his earthly home — books and all. But, in the light of our experiment, there is an alternative explanation. It was clear chat the mother and sisters had been extremely fond of the young man and had not really recovered from the trauma of his untimely death. Could they, by their continual remembrance of him and their fond thoughts of him, have finally conjured up a thought* form sufficiently powerful for the neighbor and her daughter also to see it? Or could it be that the new neighbor and her daughter found their new-found friends so congenial that during the afternoon visits they had become telepathically attuned to the mother and sisters of the young man, so that when they were thinking of him or talking about him, they also had become tuned in? We believe that one of these is as rational an explanation as the belief that the apparition was caused by the spirit of the son.

A similar story was told us some years ago. It concerned an old man, Mr. Brown, who ran a hardware shop in a rural part of southern England. Two women who lived in the same village needed to have an electric heater repaired. One of them decided to take it into the shop, and on entering the shop noticed that the owner's son was already attending co another customer. She did not have a lot of faith in the younger man s ability to deal with her heater and hoped that the owner, whom she had known for many years, would appear and deal with her problem. At that moment she saw him coming down

the stairs at the back of the shop, Unaccountably, however, he disappeared, and she had to hand over her heater to the young man. On returning home she recounted to her sister what had happened, remarking that she had wanted to sec Mr. Brown but, unfortunately, although she saw him at the back of the shop, he had not come to attend to her. To her great surprise her sister then told her that, while she was out, the sister had learned that Mr. Brown had died on the previous day.

At first sight this appears to be a another "real" ghost story — very much in the traditional form. However, again, since the news came about the man being dead while the other sister was possibly in the shop at the same moment, and since the two women, living together for many years, were probably very close and may well have had a great deal of telepathic rapport, there is the possibility that they could have created at that moment an apparition as a flash of telepathic rapport. This, we feel, is as equally logical an explanation as the disembodied spirit hypothesis.

There was a haunting in Toronto that opened up the original discussion on ghosts and apparitions that led to the formation of the 'group of eight," and gave rise to the Philip experiment. Although this haunting has already been written up in *New Horizon* (Vol. 1., No. 1); in view of our present knowledge of the subject, it is probably worth repeating here. If we had known then what we know now, we would probably have tackled the problem in a different way if we were called in to observe a similar case today.

We were contacted by a friend of the owner of a house in Toronto who said that they felt the house was haunted. The lady of the house said she had felt generally uneasy in the building, and especially uncomfortable in the laundry. Also, over a long period she had repeatedly heard noises — raps on inside doors, sounds of small objects falling on floors, a noise as if someone were walking around upstairs. This woman had also had two dreams in which the figure of a woman had come

toward her in a menacing manner

About three years before, in this same house, a housewife, the previous occupant, had commuted suicide by hanging herself from a pipe near the ceiling at an end wall of the laundry room of the basement The woman living at present in the house had been told of this tragedy shortly after the rapping and knocking noises began — so this perfectly fits our theory that a subconscious scapegoat was found for the noises. The Toronto Society for Psychical Research was then consulted and in due course a team of investigators spent a night in the basement.

This same learn had spent considerable time with the lady of the house, and they were well aware of the story of the suicide. During the small hours of that night some of the members of the team did in fact sec an apparition, and they attempted to photograph it. Unfortunately, the picture produced only an unusual effect, but no apparition. It was during the discussion as to what the members of our investigating team had seen that the decision was made to try and create our own apparition. Because of experience gained during the experiment, we would now probably deal with such a haunting in a different manner We believe now that the team probably tuned in telepathically to the occupants of the house, and probably created the apparition of the hanged woman themselves.

It is interesting to note that subsequent to this investigation the noises died away, and no further apparitions were seen. The occupant, however, was still uneasy in the laundry, and asked for something to be done. We do not believe in exorcism as such, but felt that a simple service of prayer in the laundry might help set her mind at rest, so this was done A half dozen or so members conducted a simple service of prayer for peace and tranquility in the house, and this completely laid the ghost. "which has neither been heard nor seen since"

Our group of sitters has not by any means given up hope of seeing Philip materialize one day. If this happens, Philip will indeed be a true "thought-form."

13.
Thought-Forms and Hallucinations

During (heir preparation for (he Philip experiment, our group of sitters read a great deal concerning the creation erf thought forms or hallucinations, and it may be worthwhile to include a few observations here about these phenomena. Much literature has been written on the creation of thought-forms, and many methods are advocated for their production, some warnings have also been given as to the possible dangers of producing this kind of effect. These dangers should be clearly understood for what they are before light heartedly embarking on similar experiments. We believe that provided the subject is thoroughly understood, as in our experiment, there is no danger, but nevertheless we observed certain precautions.

Philip, as a person and in his character, has always been clearly understood by us to be a good person in every sense of the word. Our conception of him is that he is kind, considerate, and gentle, and would never harm anybody. This has been constantly reiterated, and it is believed firmly by all members of the group. Furthermore, although the group by common decision or invitation will, as it were, "carry him anywhere with them.' either to a party or to a television studio, it is understood by the group that he is otherwise not to be "summoned." except in his own room. He is never allowed "to visit*' individual members of the group, or to manifest himself co any member except *to the group* at their request. All members

of the group have trained themselves to leave Philip behind them when they go home, and not to attempt to communicate with him individually, in any way, during the week or between meetings.

If a form should appear at any lime, it will, by the group's decision, be confined to the one place, the home of George and Iris Owen, the headquarters of the Toronto Society, where it can be kept under control, and where no one will be alarmed. We have had no difficulty in developing this group approach to a possible appearance.

Our emphasis upon developing a proper psychological altitude toward a possible group production of an apparition was purely precautionary. The group is quite aware chat should it succeed in producing an image of Philip ii would be a creation of the members' own mental concentration, a form created by their own thoughts. Therefore, if this theory is correct, a Philip apparition could only appear and act within the limits they themselves as a group set, and thus there could be no danger to any member of the group. Nevertheless, living as we do within a society which is prone to accept such an unusual phenomenon as a manifestation of a discarnate spirit, with possible movement and motivation of its own, it was necessary that the group as a whole *emotionally* accept that whatever it produces will be a product of group dynamism and subject to group direction. This was absolutely necessary' if the members were 10 suffer no emotional or psychological disturbance.

Those participating in the experiment realize that it is important for them to have this firm group conviction. First, because they must continue to enjoy emotional security with each other. Second, because they all agree with the Batcheldor and Brookes-Smith theories that in order to be able to produce phenomena they must all believe that the phenomena *can* be created and that it is necessary to eliminate all feelings of surprise or fear in the event that an apparition should appear. Without such convictions the phenomena would cease, in other

words, they have to school themselves to think that the phenomena are the logical and obvious explanation of what they themselves are doing.

We reiterate, however, that we are by no means claiming at this stage of our knowledge and research, that all ghosts and apparitions are the creation of thought-forms of the people viewing them. We are saying that we believe, in some cases, this may well be true. If we succeed in conjuring up Philip under these conditions, we shall view him as such.

A great deal has been written about thought-forms and their relationship to hallucinations and ghost stones, and this is not the place io enter into a long discussion of all these theories. But some of what has been writicn has been found io be very relevant to the Philip experiment and has also been of help to the group in understanding some of the problems involved.

Something that was read by the group in the beginning stages of the Philip experiment was a chapter in The *Encyclopedia of Ancient and Forbidden Knowledge* (Zolar. 1970) entitled ‘ Artificial Entities." We would differ from Zolar in some respects, because he conceives a "thought-form" or pseudo-ghost as having an objective though transient reality, whereas we are using the term as a figure of speech. However, Zolar regards these artificial entities or ghosts as the creations of the minds of men, being highly concentrated masses of thought-forms, with no energy other than that given by their creators. He says the majority of these entities or thought forms are created unconsciously by persons who manifest a strong desire-force, which is accompanied by mental pictures of what they desire. He takes this account somewhat further in alleging that strong wishes for good, or for evil, might also create thought-forms. He says also chat these forces can be neutralized or even destroyed by a positive thought which is properly projected.

Zolar theorizes that a strongly religious mother who prays for the protective influence of angels around her children

may actually create such thought forms; he believes also chat many family ghosts are created and kept in being by belief in the reality of constantly repeated tales, sustained by generation after generation. He alleges that the celebrated historical ghosts who warn royal or noble families of approaching death, or of sorrows to come, belong to this class of thought-form, as do the familiar family ghosts walking the walls of old castles and battlements on certain anniversaries. Philip, naturally, belongs to this classification of ghost, except that his family is the group, and his history has been invented.

While we would not necessarily agree with all that Zolar says, his basic theory agrees very much with our own, and we are encouraged to continue with the experiment.

We had an interesting confirmation of Zolar s theory that the thought-form could be dispelled easily by a positive thought, properly projected. Early one evening during the Philip experiment, when Philip had been rather quiet and we were not getting much in the way of rappings or movement, Sid had jokingly remarked that if we wished we could send Philip away, and the rapping had subsequently ceased.

The experience, however, gave us renewed assurance in our experiment. We realized that should anything happen that we did not wish, we could control it with a concentrated thought, thus confirming the remarks made at the beginning of this chapter, that we had plenty of "built-in" safeguards.

It was taken for granted that if a thought-form was created in this manner, it would be visible not only to the people concerned bur to others in the room who may not have taken pan in the experimental work of the group, or who may not have had the same psychological background and training There are several types of thought-form that could possibly be produced, h will be remembered that the group was originally thinking of a collective hallucination, a phenomenon which, if it did happen, would be (in a sense) much easier to explain, and concerning which quite extensive literature is available. A collective hallucination is explicable as the result

of a "flash" of telepathy among the group members. If this occurred, only *they* would see the hallucination because it would not exist in any other form than in their own mind s eye. In other words, it would be a visualization of a group telepathic-thought.

In moat meditation systems people are trained in visualization techniques. Some people who are good at visualization and who train themselves in this type of experience can have very' striking visions, not only of people but of objects "seen." The hallucinations seen are as real to the recipient as material objects and people. Visualization can also be obtained by using hypnotic techniques. This experience is well known in stage hypnosis, when, for instance, the subject is told that a person whom he knows is standing before him. The subject is seen to react exactly as if the person were there; or if told that there is an open door in an obviously solid wall, the subject will make repeated attempts to walk through it. The person or door are not in any way visible to the audience, they are just *not there,* but to the subject under hypnosis, they are as real as anything else around him. It would seem logical then, that if a number of people successfully trained themselves in telepathic techniques (as in the Philip group), they would produce an image which was common to the whole group, and they presumably would ail have the common experience of seeing an object or person. Presumably also, they would all have to agree on the nature of the object, and their descriptions of it would then tally absolutely, although the focus of their attention had no objective existence at that time and place.

This phenomenon seems more easily understood, as numerous accounts bear witness. Indeed, one group of people we know, who have been practicing meditation techniques for a period of three years, and who meet regularly (thus creating the same type of rapport within the group as the Philip sitters did), report that from time to time, in addition to experiencing group hallucinations when all the members are present, they

have shared dreams, which are identical in all details. This is somewhat different from a telepathic communication received during a dream, when a thought might be transmitted, or possibly a symbolic picture, which might vary from person to person but convey the same thought. These people actually all *had the same dream* and were able to write it down in their own homes. Upon subsequent comparison, the details were all in agreement. This experience seemed to be more explicable as a collective dream hallucination, and in view of their waking experiences this appears the more plausible explanation.

On the basis of the foregoing it is possible that Philip might materialize in one of three forms: (1) as a shared dream, or (2) as a collective hallucination apparent only to the members sharing the experience, or (3) as a separate hallucinatory apparition which could be seen not only by all members of the group but by others who are present, it is perfectly possible that he could manifest at different times in all of these three forms.

Since this chapter is called "Thought-Forms and Hallucinations" it might be interesting to mention briefly a further variation on the thought-form, which is known as the "doppelganger" phenomenon. This would have relevance to the Philip story if by chance, instead of an hallucination of Philip appearing, an image of one of the members of the group should appear instead. This would be even more striking *if* that member were not present, but perhaps away sick, and wishing to be with the group. As the group members have psychologically oriented themselves only to the production of a vision of Philip, this event is unlikely to take place. There is some interesting literature on the subject, however, as well as some excellent first-hand accounts of this phenomenon which deserves consideration in this context.

In this type of manifestation, when it happens just to one person, it is usually the image of that person that is created Thus the person concerned sometimes sees his or her own

image, although ocher people in the vicinity may see two separate forms, one of the real person and one of the image. Unlike mirror images, each image can be doing different things, and occasionally the two forms can be in different places at the same moment. This is a phenomenon which, like other forms of psychic experience, has been reported in the literature of many nations and cultures, from earliest rimes until the present day. Many reputable people have borne witness to having experienced this strange bi-location.

As in the Philip phenomenon, a certain type of psychological background appears to be necessary for the phenomena to occur at all. and perhaps three examples will suffice to illustrate this. It so happens that both of the authors of this book have been nurses, one in England (Iris) and one in Canada (Sue). They discovered they were both familiar with the condition known as "night nurse s syndrome." It happens in the very early hours of the morning, after a busy night, usually when one is utterly exhausted and on the verge of sleep, but must not go to sleep. Reports have to be written up for the day staff, and various forms have to be filled in. One has to keep awake, It sometimes happens in this almost twilight stare that the nurse has the experience of looking up from her writing and seeing herself coming toward herself. This, we have found, is not an uncommon experience among nurses and also among other people who work long and exhausting night hours, and who have tremendous responsibilities. Iris herself had this experience on one occasion.

We read a story recently of a schoolteacher in France who was seen by her pupils in the classroom writing on the blackboard. On looking through the window they could also see her on the lawn picking flowers. This happened on several occasions, and it was stated that the girls and other members of staff rushed out to the garden, but the vision vanished as they came up to it. The real teacher was still in the classroom.

In the Eastern world there is a great deal of literature on this subject, and there are many reports of holy men who can

perform (he feat of creating their own double, or *tupla* as it is called in Tibetan lore. There is a chapter describing this type of phenomena in *Magic and Mystery in Tibet* (David-Neel, 1972). The author gives an account of how the Tibetan holy men, by virtue of prayer and meditation, are sometimes able to create a thought-form duplicate of themselves, a *tupla,* which they use to protect themselves by sending it into situations where they might be in danger. Miss David-Neel says that after considerable learning and practice she was able to produce a *tupla* of her own, although in her case she did not produce a double of herself but "a monk, short and fat, of an innocent and jolly type." She says that after a few months of concentration of thought, and performance of the necessary' rites, the phantom monk was formed. His form gradually grew fixed and lifelike and he became a kind of guest living in her apartment. During the period she had been forming the monk she had been living quietly, but she then embarked on a journey, taking with her, her servants and tents. The monk came too!

She says that although she lived in the open, riding for many miles each day, the illusion persisted with her, behaving naturally as any member of the party would, and performing actions that she had not commanded. However, she says that he underwent an apparent personality change, and she felt that he had escaped her control. So, she dissolved her phantom, but ii took her six months to be finally rid of him. She relates that on at least one occasion, he was seen by someone else and taken for a lama. She finishes this account with the remark: 'There is nothing strange in the fact that I may have created my own hallucination. The interesting point is that in these cases of materialization, others, too, see the thought-forms that have been created."

Such accounts are difficult to credit, but one is forced to remember how in the light of personal experience, one is driven to believe in the reality of things one could in no way have accepted twenty years ago. One cannot make discoveries

or discover truths with a closed mind. Since we cannot yet explain with all our modem knowledge how the raps in our fable occur, under bright light and in front of witnesses, we cannot say that these other things cannot be true, just because we do not understand how they can come about.

14. The Relationship of the Philip Phenomena to Spiritualistic Belief

In order to produce the Philip phenomena our group had to resort to the techniques used by the sitters in stance circles during the Victorian era. Séance's were the "in" thing during the latter quarter of the last century and the earlier years of the present century. We intend, in this chapter, to examine briefly some of the literature and history of the spiritualist movement during these years, and to try to relate our present- day state of knowledge not only to what was believed and practiced at that time but also to the beliefs of spiritualism today.

The story of the growth of spiritualism has to be looked at against the background of Victorian society and conventionalism. It is generally accepted that the Fox sisters of Rochester, New York, became the originators of the spiritualist movement. On Friday, March 31, 1848, they heard raps, apparently emanating from the table around which they were sitting with their parents, purporting to be caused by the spirit of a murdered peddler. The event was well documented by an E. E. Lewis, an alert and literate investigator from Canandaigua, New York, who arrived at the home of the Fox family three days after the event took place. He interviewed the Fox family, their neighbors, and any other witnesses he could find, regarding the phenomena. He managed to procure in all twenty-two signed statements, some of considerable length.

The result of this investigation was published by Mr. Lewis a few weeks later in a pamphlet entitled "A Report of the Mysterious Noises Heard in the House of Mr. John Fox."

It is an extremely rare publication, and at the present time only four copies are believed to be in existence. Lewis account of the proceedings has been quoted innumerable times since. Slater Brown in *The Heyday* of *Spiritualism* (1972) quotes Lewis to the effect that Mrs. Fox said that mysterious noises began to be heard in the house a week or two before the end of March, when ostensibly communication was first obtained. The sounds varied, sometimes resembling furniture being moved. At other times they were like someone pounding on the walls or floor and were often so violent that vibrations could be felt. They searched the house for the cause of this disturbance, but could find nothing to account for the noises.

On the night of March 31, the family was exhausted from previously disturbed nights and retired at seven o'clock. The two girls had moved their beds into their parents' room for company and protection. It should be said that the girls were Maggie, who was fifteen years of age at this time, and Cathie, who was eleven years old. They were said to be simple country girls, without much learning or scholarship. Mrs. Fox, the mother, was a simple and kindly countrywoman, not too intelligent, who had had a hard struggle throughout her marriage. In earlier years the family had separated, partly because of Mr. Fox's addiction to drink. There had been four children from the earlier phase of their marriage, and the separation had lasted for about twelve years. However, the father became converted to Methodism and reformed his drunken habits; the Foxes were reunited. The two girls, Cathie and Maggie, were children of this later reunion. These two girls were extremely devoted to each other and stayed very close throughout their whole lives. Fox himself was alleged to be dour and uncommunicative and showed no interest in. or sympathy with, the events that resulted from these disturbing happenings. The home they lived in was an old ramshackle frame house, in bad

repair, and unattractive. It had no reputation for being haunted.

As soon as the family retired to bed on the historical Friday night, knockings were heard. For some reason, on this occasion, instead of being afraid or nervous, the two girls began to imitate them. Perhaps they were gaining confidence from the fact that they did not have to sleep alone-Cathie snapped her fingers and asked the raps to answer, and to everyone s astonishment the raps did indeed "answer." Maggie then clapped her hands and asked for a reply, and again an answer came. Mrs. Fox then asked for ten raps, and these were immediately given in response. When Mrs. Fox asked for the ages of her six children to be rapped out, these were produced with complete accuracy.

Mrs. Fox made a deposition to Mr. Lewis on the fourth of April, and in this she stated that she proceeded to interrogate the invisible spirit and was given the information (via a code of raps which seemed to evolve naturally) that it was indeed the spirit of someone who had been injured m the house, also that the person who had caused the injury was still alive and chat the spirit s mortal remains were buried under the house. At this stage Mrs. Fox became somewhat alarmed, and sent for a neighbor. This neighbor was Mrs. Redfield, who came into the house in a spirit of levity and disbelief, but on having questions about her own age and personal life revealed via the raps, was considerably shaken, and sent for her husband. He came with two more neighbors. These witnesses also were convinced of the "spirit's" genuineness by the fact that it responded with accurate information when questioned about their lives, ages, and personal affairs.

Considerable excitement was engendered in the neighborhood, and the audience continued to grow. As the questioning proceeded, so grew the story. The rapper alleged, in answer to questions put to him, that he had been a peddler, that he had been murdered by a former occupant of the house for money (five hundred dollars, in fact), that he had been

stabbed through the throat with a butcher's knife, and that his corpse had been buried in the basement. The story became embroidered — the peddler had been thirty-one years old. A widower with five children, three girls and two boys, and had come from Orleans County with a trunk and a pack of goods. By this time more than a dozen visitors had appeared in the Fox home. The questioning of the peddler about his own story was interspersed with questions about the various neighbors as they came in, these all being answered with uncanny accuracy.

On being asked his name, however, the spirit proved somewhat uncooperative. Despite some ingenious methods attempted by the audience to induce him to spell it out, they could only ascertain that his initials were BC At twelve o'clock that night, the party broke up; Mrs. Fox and the girls went to a neighbor s home for the night, leaving Mr. Fox and a gentleman friend alone in the haunted house. By the next day the news had spread, and dozens of people thronged from far and near to hear the repetition of the peddler's story via the raps. Committees were set up to investigate the story and question the raps. Unfortunately, despite the allegation that the body was buried in the cellar, this could not be proved because whenever digging was started, underground water soaked the spot where the body supposedly lay. This flow of water could not be overcome even by the installation of a pump. So no corpse or skeleton was ever found to prove the truth of the story.

On the third day of the disturbances, the rappings were heard for the first time in daylight. Many of the people present who heard the noises, and who took part in the investigation, left sworn statements to the effect that they had used every method at their command to find the origin of the raps, that they were unable to accuse anyone of making the noises, and that they could not account for the noises other than that they were caused by some supernatural means.

However, further investigations continued to be made,

and the controversy continued to rage. John Bell, a black smith, the person alleged by the "spirit" of the peddler to have committed the murder, came forth, and denied strenuously that he was guilty of such a crime. Forty-four persons in the township who knew Mr. Bell came from dozens of miles to the Fox home to sign a document expressing their disbelief in the charges and to attest to his good character. However, a young woman who had been employed as a maid by the Bell i about five years previously came forward and gave a somewhat circumstantial account of a peddler who had been seen at the Bell home, and according to her had never been seen again. She said that she had been dismissed from the Bell's service on that very day, but it was also a matter of record that Mrs. Bell left that afternoon for *a* lengthy visit to friends, and it was also suggested she did not like to leave her husband alone with a fourteen-year-old girl. Various other remarks, unconfirmed and circumstantial, were made, and the controversy continued to rage.

When the cellar wall collapsed in 1904, the story was retold, and a collection of old bones was found. There was no proof that they were human bones, and there was a rumor that they had been planted there by the owner in an effort to arouse interest m the house, which had by then become a spiritualist shrine. The peddler was never traced, although the raps did at one time spell out his name in full. A search of records failed to trace him or his five children. Incidentally, it has not been uncommon in the history of poltergeist cases for the rapper to accuse innocent people of crimes, and of course in the famous trials of the witches of Salem several people were sent to jail or to the gallows on the evidence of girls younger than the maidservant of the Bell's.

The rappings in the Fox household continued for two more weeks, and then the family moved to the home of their son David, a few miles away, but peace still eluded them. The rappings came too. Shortly after, the Foxes realized that the rappings only occurred in the presence of the two sisters At

the time all those who had set out to investigate the rappings were unanimous in declaring chat they could find no cause whatever for the rappings Many years later the girls were accused of producing the noises by throwing objects surreptitiously. or by cracking their knee joints, or by tapping with their toes. It seems inconceivable that so many of their friends and neighbors should have failed to discover this at the time and should have been so completely baffled by childish and obvious tricks. Their accounts, as given and sworn to, ring true.

In the light of our present knowledge of poltergeist phenomena, we believe those events were most likely true. The story of the peddler and the sequence of the events are so similar to the type of phenomena we have experienced in the Philip group that we feel the account of the disturbances given in Mr. Lewis' pamphlet, and so well recounted in Brown's book, must be accurate and factual.

We repeat; we believe that the events did take place as related. But what about the explanation that later arose as to the cause of them? Was there a dead peddler? Did he come back from the dead to accuse his murderer? Did John Bell stab him in the throat with a butcher's knife and rob him? If the peddler had five children, why didn't one of them ever come forward? The story received immense publicity; it seems unlikely that a man with five children could disappear without someone doing something about it. If the children were still small — the alleged murder had happened about five years before the rappings — who was looking after the children? The story is similar to many that occur during automatic handwriting, or at ouija board sessions, and as we have said, bears great similarity to the Philip story.

About two years ago we received a letter at the Toronto Society for Psychical Research from someone who had been conducting a session with the ouija board. This person had received a message from someone who said that he had been a schoolteacher who had drowned in Lake Ontario about

twenty years previously. The ouija board "personality" gave a full name, a date for the drowning, and an address and a message for the schoolteacher's brother who, he said, was still alive. This message appeared to be completely authentic. A most careful search revealed that no drowning of anyone even remotely resembling the person alleged to be communicating, had taken place We could not trace that any such person had ever existed. The brother's address was fictitious. The address existed, but not the given number. Nobody with that name was listed in any directory. The whole thing was complete fiction, in spite of its sounding so genuine.

The actual rappings and noises of the Fox story may well have been genuine, and not the tricks they were later alleged to be, but the explanation given for them at the time was probably incorrect.

We have to look at the spiritualistic explosion against the background of the Victorian scene in order to understand why this strange, but by no means unusual, story gave rise to the existence of what finally became a new and extraordinarily popular religion. The disturbances in the Fox family, and the interpretation given them, came at just the right moment to stimulate interest. Considerable controversy was taking place at the time as to the validity of the claims of mesmerism, the value of magnetism (especially in relation to healing), and the strange powers of hypnosis. Franz Mesmer had been born a century before the occurrence of the Fox disturbances, and he became a doctor of medicine at the University of Vienna. He had studied the effects of planets on people and believed that this force was an electric one. Ac that time all electrical investigation was centered around the magnet, and Mesmer got the idea that diseased bodies could be cured by stroking them with a magnet. Later, having had discussions with a Roman Catholic priest, John Gassner, who believed that all illnesses arose from demoniacal possession, he discarded his magnetism theories, favoring the belief that man himself had the power co heal. But, for a while magnetism became the

rage. Everything was magnetized, even clothes and the plates from which people ate. Mesmer was the center of a wave of popular enthusiasm that could be likened to the popularity of modern pop stars such as the Beatles. In a sense, he became a prisoner of his own ideas.

Mesmer went to Pans, where he was as popular as he was in Vienna, although scientists regarded him as a charlatan A commission was appointed by Louis XVI which ruled against magnetism, suggesting that it might disrupt public morality. Mesmer then resorted to showmanship. His consulting rooms were hung with mirrors, soft music was played, and the air was perfumed. The patients sat around a vat in which mysterious ingredients were bubbling, and they held each other's hands. Mesmer would enter the room, dressed as a magician, making passes.* or touching the patients, or just looking at them. In this emotionally charged atmosphere people were reported to have had fits and seizures and to have become hysterical. But Mesmer overplayed his hand. His genuine gifts were forgotten because of the raging controversy that followed and because of the rash of imitators and frauds who took up this apparently prosperous field. Magnetism fell into disrepute, and Mesmer returned to Vienna. He then went to Switzerland, where he died in 1815.

Mesmer had had many disciples and some of them were seriously and scientifically interested in the theories that he had evolved. Among them were the Marquis de Puysegur, who developed the knowledge of hypnosis, and Deleuse, who discovered the ability to make a hypnotic suggestion that would be acted upon when the subject came out of a hypnotic trance. It was this aspect of hypnotism that gave rise to the theatrical aspects of hypnotism, so that it became a popular stage trick.

* Mesmer waved his hands around in the manner of a magician waving a wand, or a fairy godmother making a spell and alto actually stroked hit patient's faces. It was then called "making passes", and it so written up in the literature of the times. It was part of the ritual. this is the origin of the modern phrase "making passes"

A short while later medical practitioners were discovering the value of hypnosis in surgery, It was beginning to be recognized as a successful medical tool at the time when chloroform was discovered, and of course, this latter discovered was more reliable and efficient. A pattern undergoing surgery under hypnosis needed several sessions of preconditioning before surgery could be attempted, thus taking valuable time; chloroform was instantaneous. Nevertheless, it is recorded that Dr. John Elliotson, one of the first doctors to use a stethoscope and one of the founders of University College Hospital in London, England, removed the leg of one of his patients under hypnosis — a remarkable feat indeed. The man was said to have shown no sign of feeling pain. Because of his belief in hypnostism, however, Dr. Elliotson lost his professional reputation; he was removed from his professorship at London University and was regarded as an outcast by his medical colleagues. By the time of the Fox disturbances, members of the public generally were becoming somewhat wary of mesmerism and hypnotism and were prepared for something new and different. Hence the ready acceptance of spiritualism as a new and different theory.

One has also to relate interest in spiritualism to the social background of the Victorian age Movies, radio, and television had not yet been invented. Public interest in intellectual matters was rising, as people were more leisured than they had been before the Industrial Revolution, and they were prepared to read more, to think more, and to be receptive to new ideas. Victorian morality was still prevalent. Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, with their concept of family life, dominated social behavior, and one can readily see the attractions of a séance circle, composed of members of both sexes, who sit around in semi- or complete darkness, in a sociable milieu, holding hands, singing songs — all done with the ostensible objective of intellectual stimulation and the advancement of knowledge. One can see that the seeds of spiritualism fell on fertile ground.

This was also the lime during which religion became promoted and somewhat dubiously promoted. It was the age of the hellfire and damnation evangelistic preachers. In the late 1850s, Spurgeon preached at the Crystal Palace before 23.654 people; the beginning of the era that has its modern counterpart in the popular evangelism of Billy Graham. The Church of England built two hundred new churches between 1826 and 1856, but within the churches people were caught between the conflicting claims of the spectacular evangelists, the intellectual theologians, the established church, and the effort made in 1850 by the Pope to reestablish the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church in England. Amid all this confusion it was not surprising that the new religion, spiritualism, quietly raised its head and commenced to grow.

Spiritualism started as a movement in America, following the disturbances in the Fox household. At that particular stage n was still more of a parlor game, albeit an exciting one. People would gather together in small groups. Already the idea that one specially gifted person had to be present in order to produce the raps had been suggested, this person being designated as the "medium." the channel through which the spirits would speak. Questions would be asked and answered by means of the raps, and along with the rapping, the tables started moving, much in the same fashion that our Philip table moves. The movement spread to Paris, where it is reported that the tables were speaking "alphabetically and intelligently." The phenomena was immensely attractive, and "table turning" panics were the rage — special tables were turned out by the hundreds.

In 1852 a young American woman, Mrs. Hayden, the wife of a New York journalist and the first spiritualist medium to go to Britain, disembarked in England to spread the movement officially. She was invited to the home of a politician, Mr. Crowe, in Cavendish Square, where an exhibition of table rapping was given before an invited and select group of friends of Mrs. Crowe — author of *The Night Side of Nature.*

and ardently interested in things supernatural. Table turning was also taken up by Queen Victoria and by Prince Albert, the queen having been for some years interested in the occult, and this added to the respectability of the pastime. Table turn mg replaced the interest that had been shown in magnetism and hypnotism. Unfortunately, just as these fields had been invaded by fraudulent practitioners, so did the rapping and table-turning parties become a fruitful area for deceit and trickery. As people realized this, many precautions were de vised against trickery. Mediums were subjected to all kinds of indignities, such as searching and handcuffing, and electrical currents were devised to give warning should they break the circle.

In spite of the fact that the Fox sisters obtained their raps in full light, the Victorian séance circles believed that phenomena could only be obtained in darkness It is probable that this belief arose as a social convention in a party atmosphere, rather than from any actual belief that darkness was necessary' more fun to sit tn the dark, especially as the spirits were also alleged to prefer a balanced group of the sexes, with people sitting beside each other alternatively male and female. It was at this stage, when there was evidence of fraud among those people who were cashing-in on the interest aroused by this phenomena, that skeptical scientists, looking back at the original Fox sittings, ascribed to the Fox sisters some of the tricks (hat were being performed by mediums at this time, such as throwing apples, cracking joints, and tapping toes. If one reads carefully, however, the original depositions of the people who were sincerely puzzled by the Fox disturbances, and who in a painstaking and careful way examined all the evidence at the time, writing their accounts within a few weeks of the events, one can see that these allegations of fraud are without foundation. Simply because fraud exists in one time and place does not necessarily mean that it exists at other times.

As the years went on there came a need for an addition

to the original table rapping and table turning. In spite of the party atmosphere, there was a limit to the fun of having conversation through a table. So, other refinements were added. Perhaps when a group of people have been sitting together for a long time they develop other skills. A séance circle tended to become a closed circle, with the same group of people meeting regularly, often over a period of many yean. Although these further developments have m many cases been ridiculed over succeeding yean as blatant fraud and trickery, one must look at (hem in the light of current knowledge and the Philip experiment.

Stories of séances are too numerous to quote here. An excellent book on this subject, and one from which we have taken many of the details quoted here, is *The Table Rappers* (Pearsall, 1972).

We would, however, like co refer co one particular group of sittings over which much controversy has raged, and which have recently been discussed: the celebrated séance sittings at which Sir William Crookes was present, and where the medium concerned was a young woman named Florence Cook. This medium gave "materialization séances," which were by then (in the 1880s) a popular form of séance sitting. In the room where the seance was held there was a cabinet that was usually placed in the corner, against the walls of the room, and reached co the ceiling. The frame was of wood, and there was a door or curtain across the front. It was in this cabinet that the medium sat during the stance. Mediums by then had usually learned to go into trance, a state not used in the earlier days of rapping and table turning. This trance state was alleged to make it easier for the spirits to manifest themselves through the medium.

With the medium in a trance state in the cabinet, the curtain drawn across the cabinet front and with the room in total darkness, many strange things could happen. Voices would be heard, supposedly those of people who had died, objects would float around the room, trumpets would blow,

flowers would be tossed among the inters Best and most wonderful of all, if the sitters were very lucky, there would issue from the door of the cabinet a "real spirit" the form of someone who had died, but who, it was said, had used the medium's body materials to show himself or herself to the people in the room. It was said that the medium was still in trance in the cabinet. The sceptics and nonbelievers had a great lime devising ways and means of catching the unscrupulous mediums in fraud or trickery. Such a situation could not be better arranged for fraudulent sittings and many gullible people parted with their money in order to be able to participate in the sittings.

Nevertheless, there are some accounts of phenomena that were produced which, in the light of what we have already written, we believe are not fraudulent. The truth, or otherwise, of the Florrie Cook linings seems finally to turn on whether one is able to believe that Sir William Crookes, an eminent scientist and Fellow of the Royal Society, was an unbiased and critical observer, and whether he was telling the truth when he described his investigations of Florence s abilities as a medium. Florrie apparently had the power, when in trance, of materializing the form of another young woman, who called herself Katie King, and who was able to come out of the cabinet and walk around the room, mingling wnh and being touched by the sitters At the same time, according to Sir William Crookes, Florrie herself was still inside the cabinet in trance. He himself was allowed inside the cabinet to view this phenomenon.

Argument continues over this particular group of séances, and a few years ago Trevor Hall, then a member of the British Society for Psychical Research, published a book called *The Spiritualists,* alleging that Sir William was having an affair with Florence at the time and was emotionally committed to defending her integrity. This provoked a tempest of correspondence, much of it defending Crooke's integrity Crookes never went back on his original evaluation of Florrie

and always maintained that he had reported honestly what he had seen, and that he was not deceived. However, after this long period of time it has become a matter of opinion, and we have an uncomfortable feeling in our Philip group that unless we can get further along the road to understanding just what these 'materialization" phenomena really were, and how the whole thing worked, we may be at the mercy of some future biographer who may attempt to throw doubt on our own integrity and motives.

But how did spiritualism become a religion? Why did it become, for so many people, a substitute for the accepted and established churches? Orthodox religion was in a state of particular confusion just as public interest in spiritualism was growing. Some theologians were saying that what was lacking in religion was not a philosophical but a moral need of a revelation. Here was a new moral revelation. If one could communicate with the souls of the dead, as was being claimed, then surely this was all that was needed to turn people toward a better practice of true Christianity, A number of clergymen found they could reconcile this new development with their religious beliefs, and in 1855 spiritualism officially became a religion when the first spiritualist newspaper with religious aspirations was founded — *The Yorkshire Spiritualist Telegraph.* It was quietly accepted as another branch of the nonconformist movement.

Spiritualism, in case there is a reader unfamiliar with its beliefs, claims to be for most of its adherents a branch of Christianity, and if one enters a spiritualist church one will take part in a Christian service that uses familiar hymns and prayers. But the emphasis is on the instruction that comes from the spirits, via the medium in the form of revelations and divine truths. Depending on the particular church and the medium, the service may also take the form of a special faith-healing service.

Spiritualism today is a worldwide movement, having many thousands of adherents. There are spiritualist churches

in almost every community where regular services are held. The British Association of Spiritualists publishes a weekly newspaper, *Psychic News,* which boasts a readership of over one hundred thousand, and whose slogan is "You Will Live After You Die" The whole basis of the spiritualist religion is belief that life exists after death. This is indeed the Christian belief, but the spiritualist believes that those who have passed over are able to return to the scene of (heir earthly lives and to communicate with those they have left behind. This is accomplished through chosen and gifted mediums. The spirits of the dead are alleged to offer advice, comfort, and help to their loved ones, and to reveal spiritual truths to the world at large, if people will only listen. Spiritualists also claim, through the faith they have acquired in this belief, that certain gifted people are given the power to heal the sick. (The Bible says that Christ gave this power to his disciples.)

This historical outline of the growth of spiritualism as a religion was based on the development of the movement from the original phenomena associated with the Fox sisters in Rochester, New York. These phenomena, being of a strange and unknown nature, were embellished in the descriptions given of them by subsequent participants in séance circles. This was not the first time that such phenomena were explained in terms of spirits or discarnate entities. The religions of primitive peoples are based upon a belief in spiritual entities inhabiting nature, and one feels that it was almost inevitable that these organized attempts in the form of séance's to communicate with what lies beyond time, space, and death, would eventually be cast into a religious form.

It is our personal belief, and that of most of the Toronto group, that religion is a matter of faith, and furthermore that it must remain a personal involvement. What we do wish to emphasize here is that the inescapable similarity of the Fox sisters' experiences, and the conditions under which they were produced, with the phenomena produced in the Philip experiment, implanted a firm doubt in our minds chat such

phenomena emanated either from the dead or from spirits.

It is not our intention to suggest that all spiritualism is wrong, or that the dead cannot communicate, or that there is not life after death. We are confining our observations to the relationship between the Philip experiment and the phenomena produced by the Fox sisters, and it must be stated categorically that there is a considerable resemblance. But our explanations are quite different.

There may be also a further generalization to be drawn here as a result of the evidence supplied by the Philip experiment and also from the psychological explanations for the production of the phenomena which were supplied later by Dr. Whitton. (Sec Chapter 17). While preserving our open-minded attitude toward belief in a continued existence after death, we must say that we do not think spiritualists have much cause for their belief in the communication from spines, if their conclusions are based only upon the evidence they produce of "spirits" rapping tables, sometimes giving very trivial messages Such evidence is to be taken no more seriously than that of those adherents of fundamentalism in religion who believe in an anthropomorphic concept of God as a white- bearded old father figure, or of Heaven as existing above the bright blue sky.

It is our feeling that there are more logical and acceptable naturalistic explanations for the table rappings and movements which occur at séance's. Certainly there are paranormal phenomena which seem at the present time inexplicable by cither scientific law or hypothesis. We are concerned here, however, only with the scientific aspects of our own experiment. These indicate that our knowledge and understanding of the workings of man s mind, and of his mental powers, are expanding with almost frightening speed.

The scientific impulse is an indication of man's powerful rational drive for more and more knowledge, and one area in which human curiosity and desire are paramount is in mankind's need to believe in human survival. As far as rational,

scientific investigation of this mystery is concerned, rational conclusions must remain agnostic We cannot, and must not, transform the results of a scientific experiment into a religious belief. With these points in mind, we would like to make some comparison of our Philip experiment with spiritualistic belief

If in science, reason must remain our guide, we nevertheless can possess deep expectation and desire that certain ends will be achieved. For example, it is a deep desire of mankind that his life should continue after physical death, h is difficult for man to arrive at a rational explanation of his own being without the feeling that he should, in some way, continue to exist. In the same way, although in a much less basic category, our group wanted to create a new personality in Philip, and they had to believe that they would be successful. One of the criteria laid down for producing the table rappings was *that one should believe that it can happen, and not to be surprised when it does.* If this is true, then it seems logical that a séance situation possesses all the psychological potential for producing physical phenomena.

There is a strong desire to produce evidence, and a belief that evidence can be produced. The requirements of belief and expectancy are thus met. In addition, traditionally, stance circles consist of small groups of people, meeting regularly (probably once weekly), and these are people who share common beliefs and aspirations, and who can become more and more *in rapport* as the sittings continue. This also appears to fulfill the criteria laid down as essential for the production of physical phenomena

In a report of the previously mentioned sittings with Sir William Crookes, when the company got tired of singing hymns, Sir William suggested that they all sing For He s a Jolly Good Fellow,' on the grounds that this was the only tune the whole company knew. The "spirits'[1] apparently approved, and joined in with "a sort of anvil accompaniment on chairs and tables, and things on the table." (Pearsall, 1972).

It would not be reasonable for us to claim any more than

we have at this particular stage of our scientific investigations. It is true that very few investigations have been published of phenomena alleged to be produced without the aid of acknowledged spirit communicators. There is a wealth of material in the literature of physical effects, but all the effects are alleged to be produced by discarnate spirits. The points we wish to emphasize are as follows: (1) The Toronto group produced raps and table movements, of an apparently paranormal nature, in full light, in many places, with different tables. (2) They did not designate any one person as a special communicator, nor did they believe that any single member of the group was a medium or had more power than any of the other members. In fact, any combination of four of the original group was able to produce the phenomena. (3) They do not believe that their communicator was a discarnate spirit. Their common focus of attention was an invented character, a product of their own imaginations.

One final word before we leave the relationship of the Philip phenomena to spiritualism; so far, in Toronto, we have only produced rappings and table movements. In the literature of the spiritualist movement a great deal appears regarding many, many types of different physical phenomena. Most of the noises produced can be ascribed to variations of the rapping process: noises such as tambourines rattling, knockings in objects such as chairs and walls. Similarly, when discussing table movements, there is little difference between say, floating a trumpet or a table. The Philip group, just once, had the table floating in the air for a few seconds, with all the legs about half an inch from the floor. Two independent witnesses (Robin Owen and Dr. Whitton) were present on this occasion, and although one of them had a camera, the lighting and positioning made it difficult to photograph. It gave the group great confidence that this could be done, and they hope that their future efforts will be able to produce complete levitation of the table. Neither do we yet understand how composite group-thought can be transformed into a noise that can

be heard and recorded, nor do we yet understand the mechanism. We are inclined to believe in the possibility that the instances of hearing a voice alleged sometimes to occur in mediumistic circles might be a variation of the rapping phenomena.

We still have an open mind about the possibility of creating a thought-form or apparition. With our present knowledge there would be no purpose in commenting upon the nature of ectoplasm, still less to say anything about the accounts of the alleged appearances of spirits at stances sittings. The continuation of our experiment will in part consist of efforts to create an apparition, or thought-form of Philip. If we can do this we shall feel that our efforts have been crowned with success.

The present state of spiritualistic phenomena seems to us to be one that will require more investigation before we can be sure of the explanation for much of the phenomena experienced. Although it is admitted by all those who have studied the history of early nineteenth century spiritualism that many mediums were fraudulent, not all of them were. Much of the phenomena produced were genuine. It is possible that some of it may be due to more than one cause. It is our belief that most of the phenomena, perhaps not all, are caused by natural forces or human energies. Some of it, we feel sure, is caused by the same mysterious forces or energies which the Philip experiment has demonstrated. What this force is, science has yet to explore. As for the rest, time alone will tell the story.

15.
Significance of the Philip Experiment for Farther Research

Where do we go from here, and what conclusions are implied by the results of the Philip experiment? How do we measure this energy force, if indeed this is what it is? What experiments should we be doing? How does this experiment relate to other fields of para psychological research, and does it shed any light on problems in other areas of investigation in this field? Is there some relationship to faith healing? What are the applications to the use of this force? Can any group of people produce physical phenomena? Is there a relationship to group dynamics?

These and many other questions have been asked by our group and also by friends and other people interested in what has been happening. We will try to answer some of these questions in the next few pages.

The Toronto Society for Psychical Research is a serious scientific investigating organization. Our prime object is to pursue knowledge and to try to arrive at some understanding of certain unexplained events that are explored and classified under the umbrella-like science of parapsychology. We are motivated both by curiosity and by a strong desire to know the truth. We are not particularly interested in what anybody else thinks. We are not concerned with convincing sceptics and unbelievers of the facts we discover. We want to know for ourselves and to disseminate such information as we ac-

quire to other scientists and investigators who are interested in the subject.

We are not interested in entertaining the public with performances of ESP, psychokinesis, or other feats of this kind. In our judgement, parapsychology is not a subject for general entertainment. We are aware that certain similar feats are performed by stage magicians, which are known and admitted by them to be done by means of trickery and magic. These are often presented as parapsychological events. As a consequence of this, the public becomes completely confused, and the scientific methodology and nomenclature of parapsychology suffer. However, since parapsychology is by its very nature a ' people" science, we cannot progress in knowledge in these areas without using people to investigate, as well as subjects co be investigated. We have from time to lime consented to appear on radio and television programs, both to talk about our scientific work and. in the case of the Philip experiment, to actually give a demonstration before television cameras. This has also proved, to our own satisfaction, that these effects can be produced under the most adverse conditions.

One of the problems in parapsychological research is the lack of any continuing funds or grants to support scientific investigation, especially beyond the most elementary level. There are, for instance, only a handful of parapsychologists in the world who are supported to the extent that they can devote their whole time to this kind of research. Most of the work is still done by amateur investigators and interested laymen in their spare lime, with such equipment as they can make themselves or acquire the temporary use of from interested friends. Even the few investigators who have full-time jobs in the field of parapsychology are usually on short contracts and have to resort to lecturing and demonstrating in order to get money for their research. So our future investigations are limited by the resources at our disposal in time, equipment, and in access to apparatus.

To the members of the Toronto Society involved in the

Philip experiment, by far the most interesting and puzzling feature of the phenomena is the nature of the actual physical force or energy manifested by the collective thoughts of the group. Or should we say, the energy manifested as the result of the group's having a collective thought. We do not know where this energy actually comes from We must assume that it comes from the brain, as it is apparently a result of brain activity. We know that the brain cells continually generate an electrical force which can be measured and charted. We think of group-thought energy as a variation of, or perhaps an extension of, brain-cell energy. However, we do not know for certain. We do not actually know how the force originates.

At this writing Dr. Whitton has just completed a pilot experiment in connection with brain waves, which may have some bearing on the explanation of the PK force. As the reader is undoubtedly aware, the cortex of the brain (i.e. the uppermost layer of gray matter) generates a small electric voltage. This voltage in rum produces a voltage on the scalp. Although this latter voltage is very minute, when electrodes are placed in contact with the scalp, the electric potential can be amplified many thousands of times, until it is big enough to be applied to moving the pen of a chart recorder. The chart recorder is just a more sensitive and elaborate version of the writing mechanism of a barograph, or recording barometer. This instrument records the way in which the barometric pressure of the atmosphere varies. Barometric pressure varies rather slowly, sometimes hours or days may pass before fluctuation becomes sizable enough to measure. It is different with the living brain. If one sits in a very relaxed state with one's eyes closed, it is then found that the voltage on one's cortex goes up and down about ten times a second. This is called the alpha rhythm." and one is said then to be in the "alpha state."

Usually a single rhythm is not found; if one is walking, talking, reading, or thinking about a problem (i.e. in any state of definite activity), then the voltage fluctuation in one's cortex

is a mixture of very different rhythms These rhythms are the alpha rhythm, as already mentioned; the delta rhythm, which is very slow (less than two fluctuations per second); the theta rhythm, averaging about five fluctuations per second; and the beta rhythm, which has fluctuations ranging from 14 to 25 per second. Using special electronic apparatus it is possible to find out how much of each type of rhythm, alpha, delta, theta, and beta is in anyone's brain waves when these are in a particular state of activity or rest, and the various proportions can be represented on a graph. Dr. Whitton first did this experiment with a young English psychic, Matthew Manning, who is able to bend keys, knives and forks, and ocher metal objects by mental power. When Matthew was cither actually bending a key, or attempting to bend it, the graph showing the proportion of the various rhythms had a most striking and unusual appearance Dr. Whitton described this as a "ramp function " because it resembled the downward slope of a ramp This pattern is only seen in normal people during the times of Stage III and IV sleep, but the subject was awake. It also happens that this particular partem only emanates from one particular part of the brain — that which is generally regarded as the oldest and most primitive. This was a very exciting discovery indeed.

The experiment was continued with two other people, one of whom claims an ability to travel astrally, and another who sees auras and who, in a state of automatism, produces beautiful 'cosmic art" pictures. The same effect was observed, but in nonpsychic people used as controls, these effects did not occur. This work is still m its experimental stages, and it would be rash indeed to jump to any conclusions until much more work is done. But it would be interesting to see if the members of the Philip group exhibited this same effect during the time that they were producing raps.

The energy could be the result of hormonal changes, or a force emanating from hormonal glands h could be an energy completely outside the body which, under certain conditions,

one can "call in" and utilize. It could be an accumulation of energy from the whole of one's skin area. Ii is possible that it is related to the aura, which some people see surrounding the greater part of a person's body. This has been described, by those who can see it, as an energy or electrical field.

A visible phenomenon has been described as taking place in séance circles in the form of a white substance which appears to come either from the solar plexus or from the mouths of psychic persons. Spiritualists claim that this ectoplasm is a form whereby spirits manifest themselves visually, but most researchers have been sceptical, and even some refuse to believe in its reality. If it does in fact exist, could it be a visible manifestation of psychokinetic energy?

The production of ectoplasm is a rarely reported occurrence, even in séance circles. When it does happen it is alleged to take the form of a departed spirit. There are some interesting accounts of "rods" of apparent ectoplasm which were produced in 1918, at the sittings of a group of people who were known as the Goligher circle. The medium alleged to be the focus of these phenomena was Kathleen Goligher, then about 17 years old. She was investigated by Dr. William Jackson Crawford, a lecturer in mechanical engineering at the Municipal Technical Institute in Belfast. He seemed to be very objective in his investigations, and later published a book called *The Reality of Psychic Phenomena* (Crawford, 1918). An article in *Psychic* magazine (February 19"4) quotes Crawford as follows:

> The usual table-rapping and levitations occurred, and were ascribed of course to spirit operators. This séance was in fact a private, family circle, Mr. Crawford being admitted as a friend of the family. No member of the family ever received payment for sittings. Crawford made phonographic recordings of the sounds, which ranged from scratchings to blows, and witnessed complete levitations of the table, although he noted regretfully that these seemed to occur in red light, and not in full bright light. Crawford was a mechanical engineer, so he

experimented in his own field. He discovered that Kathleen was subject to an increase of weight during the table levitations, equal to the weight of the table. This suggested to Crawford that some invisible, supernormal exteriorization from the medium's body was responsible for the levitations. He and the other sitters proved to their own satisfaction that the table was indeed levitated without anyone pushing it from underneath.

Later both Mr. Whately Smith (who later, for legal reasons, changed his name to Carrington, who became a well-known and respected investigator), and Sir William Barrett, who were admitted to the circle, observed the table levitations and pronounced them genuine. Dr. Crawford took photographs of some of these table levitations. These photographs have been used many times, and show what appears to be a rod of ectoplasm, in one case apparently emanating from the medium's body. In the other photograph the rod appears to be standing straight up in the center of the table.

In later years these events have been looked on with a great deal of scepticism, and doubt has been cast on the objectivity and credulity of the observers, despite their written assurances that at the time they had thought of the possibilities of trickery. They had even looked for evidence of fraud, but they were convinced that what they were seeing was paranormal. This might well have been so. We remember that in the Philip experiment, on several occasions in the earlier stages, a mistiness was visible for a short while during the sessions, and the group was unable to account for it.

During the paranormal experiences recorded by Brian Branston in his book *Beyond Belief* (1974). when a young man. George Southwell, who had been the victim of poltergeist disturbances wax lying on the floor in a deep state of trance, a "pencil of smoke" seemed to be coming out of his eyes. Branston recounts this incident somewhat dramatically in the film that was made during the trance session, and we quote

Branston in the film: "Suddenly I saw what appeared to be a column of smoke coming from his eye. Rica (Southwell s secretary), who was at his feet wringing her hands in some distress, saw it too. 'Look, he's steaming,' she said. Only he wasn't steaming, and it wasn't smoke, and "it" *was* there. What was 'it?' I don't know. Was it the beginning of a materialization?"

The story in all its details is told in Branson's fascinating book, and he leaves us with the question. Branston, whom we know personally, is a matter-of-fact, honest, and utterly competent observer who found himself in this situation completely by chance and reported honestly and truthfully just what he saw Such accounts can be multiplied from many personal communications of a similar nature.

We received an interesting letter once from a woman who claimed never to have had psychic experiences, nor was she interested in the subject. She wrote that one afternoon, on returning to her home after shopping, she was fascinated and alarmed to see what looked like a large lump of wet cement, which was apparently on the seat of an armchair, slowly slither to the floor and disappear. She wrote, "1 had just received news of the death of a close friend. Could this have been the ghost of the friend trying to communicate with me, and not quite managing to appear?"

We have some unusual photographs, taken under varying but experimental conditions, showing a mistiness that has appeared on the print or slide when developed, which looks like some form of the beginning or ending of a materialization. The photography firms who supplied and developed the films could not explain it. Are we from time to time managing to capture on film the picture of an energy force? Could this be similar to the force that is responsible for moving the table or objects around a poltergeist person, creating raps, knockings, and sawing noises?

How does our experiment relate to other fields of para- psychological research? It would seem logical to suggest that

many, if not all, areas of parapsychological research may ultimately be found to be in some way interconnected. It is always scientifically reasonable to postulate a theory and to see how far facts fit the theory, providing that one is careful not to twist the fact to fit the theory. As a hypothesis, we might suggest that at this time we are quite possibly dealing with only one unknown force, but that this force, used in different ways and by people with different abilities, is producing varying kinds of phenomena

Some people have more than one kind of psychic ability. An average person, when asked, "What electricity?" might find it difficult to give an answer which would be intelligible and which would convey a real meaning. One can say very easily what can be *done* with electricity, one can produce light, heat, movement, and power. One cannot see it, but one can measure its effects. So perhaps this psychokinetic force, which for convenience is often referred to as the psi force, can be looked at in the same way. But there is one big difference. The psi force originates in the human personality and is in some way controlled by the brain; it is not completely automatic, and this is why study in this field is called *parapsychology,* an acknowledgment of the fact that human personality is inevitably involved.

Let us theorize for a few moments about the possibility that there is an underlying thread that connects all the unusual events that are investigated by the parapsychologist. Let us consider if there might be a possible common denominator. Parapsychology embraces the study of ghosts, apparitions, poltergeist outbreaks, telepathy, faith healing, dowsing, psychometry, spirit photography, auras, prophecy, premonitions, and mediumism. The latter can include messages received via automatic handwriting or via the ouija board. This is an impressive list and the interested student can easily familiarize himself with any subject that pleases him. What are we entitled to claim concerning the Philip experiment?

We feel we have proved that the collective thought of

a group of people can produce physical effects that are expressed either in the form of noise (the raps) or in movements (of the table). We have proved that group telepathy exists, and that it can be directed via this force to poltergeist outbreaks We believe we are only a step away from producing a ghost, hallucination, or apparition. If we should be able to do this, we should also be able to photograph the apparition. If we are successful, does this make a link with spirit photography? In some stance circles there were reports of spirit faces being photographed above the heads of the titters. Such phenomena have usually been regarded as tricks or frauds, but suppose they were genuine? Could they conceivably have been the photographs of the thought-forms in the sitter s minds? There are some very convincing pictures in existence, taken under conditions that seem genuine, that show an apparition not visible to the people around the cable. This seems like an absurd question, but can one photograph one's own thought-forms?

The phenomenon of aura-vie wing is gaining increasing respectability, and even orthodox physicians are beginning to believe in its reality. But what is an aura? The aura is alleged to reveal the state of mind or health of the subject. Could this be another physical indication of the psi force? Some people are gifted with the ability to see an electrical current or a force-field around a magnet. Not many people possess this ability, but for those who do. it seems to be merely an extension of their normal sense knowledge, just as some people have an abnormal ability to hear sounds that are beyond the range of most of us.

Is it the psi force that is used in faith healing? The person performing such healing often describes how it feels to him or her. It is as if an energy were leaving his or her body. The recipient also frequently describes feeling warmth and tingling m the affected part, on receipt of healing. There is certainly some force at work, and the validity of faith healing is surely established.

Similarly, a dowser will frequently describe his or her gift as an energy force emanating from his or her body, and indicating through rods or a pendulum the hidden objects that are being looked for

Perhaps we have said enough to suggest to the reader that there is the possibility of a single psi force which is the connecting link for much of the data in parapsychology studies We have to admit that this is only a theory, and there are other theories for which a case could equally well be made There are some unexplained paranormal occurrences which do not seem to fit into any category as yet. Prophecy and premonition, whether in the waking or automatic state, provide us with a separate held of research. At the moment they are beyond scientific understanding and can only fit into a philosophical exposition.

We can devise instruments for measuring the forces making the noises or moving the table. This would give us an idea of the actual strength of the force or energy produced by the group, The physiological functions of the people taking part m the experiment can also be measured, both before and during the experiment, to ascertain whether there are any physiological changes during the production of the phenomena. Brain waves can be measured, heartbeats and respiration rates recorded, and skin responses can be monitored. In the light of our most recent research conducted by Drs. Lloyd and Whitton, it would be interesting to see if it is possible to measure the flash of telepathy around the group in terms of the claims of the Lloyd experiment, (*New Horizons.* Vol. 1, No. 2); also, to see if the group members produced a "rap function," as demonstrated by Dr. Whitton during the raps, Presumably, should a definite pattern emerge, one could then devise a biofeedback apparatus which would facilitate training other groups and maybe increase the strength of the phenomena.

These are lines of research which the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, limited only by the means at its disposal.

would like to follow. It is hoped that these would point to further fields of exploration. It is possible that physiologists might think of more sophisticated experiments that we might undertake, and we would be grateful for any suggestions regarding techniques for further measurements. Whether such experiments and tests will answer the all-important question as to *bout* the mental process turns thought into a physical reality remains to be seen.

In addition to these experiments, there are still many areas to explore and evaluate. The group can produce the movements and rapping? in any place, under full light, and so far, with any table. In addition, we have produced raps in adjoining walls, and on occasion the electric light can be turned on and off by Philip. It is obvious that the group should devise experiments to find out whether raps can be produced in articles ocher than the table. Other furniture should be used; attempts should be made to produce raps in chairs, sofas, ornaments (perhaps the force can shatter glass or china), as well as within the walls in the house. The effects of distance on the force of the raps should also be observed. Efforts should be made to move objects other than the table, and we should continue to try for full levitation. Later, of course, if proficiency were obtained in these areas we could attempt teleportation through closed doors.

This may seem a little fanciful, and the average reader may be forgiven for believing that the participants' imaginations are running away with them. The literature dealing with poltergeist-type cases contains many well-attested accounts of both apported and teleported objects, and it is our firm conviction that these phenomena are all variations of the poltergeist experience. Objects have been known to disappear and appear unexpectedly in the presence of this same energy force. There are firsthand accounts of this type of phenomenon from respected and unbiased witnesses.

Our feelings about the phenomenon of apportation have been borne out by the fact that during the summer of 1974,

when the group members took a brief rest from regular meetings, some of the members experienced poltergeist-type phenomena in their own homes,

The movement of objects into and out of rooms has been a phenomenon claimed by spiritualists to have taken place at many spiritualist séances, but this has also occurred during poltergeist disturbances An apport is the name for an object which has been transported from one location to another — or has appeared suddenly. There are many accounts of this type of phenomenon, and of recent years some film has been taken of objects suddenly appearing in mid-air. As stated, these are usually objects of little intrinsic value. The only way to describe their appearance is to say they arrive!

There is a fascinating account in *Beyond Belief* of an egg which, during a trance sitting, was removed from a closed box and placed on the table about six inches from the box. Unfortunately this occurred in darkness, so that the sceptic is probably justified in finding fault with this as a genuine case of apportation. We happen, however, to be acquainted with the participants at this particular event and can vouch for the honesty and the meticulous scientific approach that characterized the experiment. In our opinion, although phenomena of this kind are usually associated with spiritualistic sessions, this was a genuine, spontaneous, poltergeist outbreak, and the people concerned had no inkling of how to cope with these strange events

In this chapter we have tried to do no more than suggest possible variations and extensions of the Philip experiment and to wonder whether some of the phenomena claimed by spiritualists to emanate from the "spirit world" are only further applications of the same mysterious force or energy projected by the Toronto group in their Philip experiment.

16.
Personal Comments by the Group Members

The Philip experiment was an entirely new experience for each of (he participants. We invited each member of the group to give his or her evaluation of the experiment, and to say what it has meant to each of them personally These opinions are entirely their own and are reproduced exactly as they were written.

AL: Who is Philip? What is Philip? To date I don't know the answer. There are a lot of scientific answers. Perhaps electrical energies from the participants in the group cause the phenomena. Does the energy disrupt the molecules or atoms? Does it affect gravity? These are the questions on my mind that only scientists could possibly answer. Tests, and a study of the group itself, may give us this answer. Measurements of brain waves, pulse beats, etc., might be done. It would seem that most of the answers to our questions about Philip come from our own subconscious. The raps can only be a form of energy. Up until the Philip work I had a very open mind, although I have had some clairvoyance, presumably from the "other side." Since the progress in this experiment I have a completely different outlook, and now wonder where indeed it all comes from. My mind is completely sensitive to the group itself, and we have come to know one another, not only as friends but as a family, very

close-knit and happy. I look forward to our sessions and believe that one day we shall produce a manifestation of our Philip.

ANDY: Looking back on the Philip experience, I suppose that at the outset I was of two minds. On the one hand, I did believe in the phenomenon of telepathy, especially between relatives and close friends, though I had no explanation for it. Thought transference certainly seemed to happen to me as well as to a surprising number of my friends and acquaintances. However, rather paradoxically, I did believe that extrasensory perception would only really come into its own in the distant future, when the human species had attained maturity,

Perhaps I had been unduly "turned off" by some of the less pleasant aspects of the current ''occult revolution"— particularly the blatant commercialism. If one reads the advertisements in any of the many occultist magazines, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that many charlatans attempt, doubtless successfully, to fleece the gullible. Also, my own experience with self-claimed psychic persons had been unfortunate. I had formed the opinion that the more strident the claim, the less justified it was likely to be. As a result, while I believed that most people had some extrasensory abilities, I thought that any great potential in this direction was restricted to rather a few individuals who were genetically endowed with it, Fewer people still, I thought, had any latent capacity for PK, i.e. psychokinesis. Indeed I was rather sceptical as to whether PK happened at all.

The Philip experiment, though, has forced me to take a fresh look at the whole spectrum of parapsychology. I now regard it as a proven fact that ordinary people are able to produce psychokinetic effects.

This conclusion follows not only from the experience of the Philip group but from the fact that it is a repeatable experiment; we are finding that other groups

of ordinary people, working along the same lines, are getting similar results. By "ordinary people I mean those who may have occasionally had ESP experiences (telepathy or precognition) but who are in no sense "psychics" in the sense of regularly manifesting extrasensory perception or psychokinetic powers. Members of the Philip group have in the past occasionally had psychic experiences, but none of them claim to be "psychics in the usual sense of the word.

I find it interesting that the Philip phenomena tend to be humorous, and in this way differ from sporadic ESP impressions and communications, many of which tend to be serious in their import, Perhaps the humorous turn which the Philip phenomena cake comes about because the group resembles a family at play rather than participants in a very detached set of experiments.

One of the most important implications of the Philip experiment has nothing to do with psychical research, but concerns the effect which participation in the group sittings has on one's emotional and social life. One could say that it has the merits of a Dale Carnegie course, or of group sessions with the further advantage of no fees to pay. There is not any digging into one's subconscious and dredging up of one's neuroses. I should say that, so far as I could see, none of the Philip group is encumbered with neuroses to any appreciable degree. I do not feel that their participation in the group was serving the function of correcting such mild neuroses as other members might actually have. However the group work did have an important and beneficial outcome, this being increased social growth and self-confidence, which were delightful side effects of the experiment. The members of the Philip group are far more open to each other and in their daily lives. They feel more freedom to give voice to their opinions and generally co let their hair down. Shyness on social occasions seems to have disappeared, and the

members of the group are far more self-assertive than they were. It could be said that we have become more aware of other people and of the world around us.

BERNICE: For many years I have been interested in the mind and joined the society in order to learn more about the mind's power by becoming acquainted with the paranormal experiences of others Other than some telepathic rapport with members of my own family. I am not aware of experiencing any other forms of psychic abilities.

When the concept of constructing a ghost was presented to us as a research project, I personally accepted the idea as a big joke. I went along with the group in the early stages chiefly because of friendship, and not because I had any particular interest or belief that anything could possibly come of it.

Once the initial sorting out was completed and the group, as it is today, began to meet regularly and to attempt, through meditation, to construct the ghost, I remained to see what could happen. I suppose my initial attitude was that of extreme scepticism and curiosity. The time spent in meditation was valuable for me, as I was able to learn much more about meditation than I had previously known. I had always been attracted to meditation as a means of becoming more aware of energy forces around us, but until the experiment I had felt that meditating as an individual was not accomplishing much. In the group I began to see and feel the importance of these quiet times, and to look forward to the meetings as a form of self-discipline rather than as a research project.

There was, too, an awareness of spiritualism, and because of this I had a certain amount of fear that if there were "spirits" about, the group would perhaps be influenced by some force which it possibly could not handle. I knew that all members were quite well aware of this possibility, and that each, in his or her own way, was

searching for more informal ion on the subject. I would be inclined to think that I was not alone in this feeling and that through the med nation we somehow understood one another without ever voicing this opinion.

When the method of conducting the meetings changed to the present form. I was relieved, thinking that the noise and nonsense was a more harmless way of passing the evening

However, it was soon apparent that my judgement was wrong. The table started rapping and moving, which created a sense of exhilaration within the group. It was interesting to watch the phenomena, and also to see that the more excited the group became, the more motion or rapping was produced.

I was fascinated by it and I certainly had never participated in anything like this before. It was seeing thought-force to action.

The whole idea took on a different dimension. I became more aware of the moods and physical well-being within the group, and I was spending as much energy m this concern as I was on concentrating on the outcome. I got very excited whenever there was a different reaction from the usual, and I believe now that it will be possible to do anything we really want, such as completely levitate the table or even produce a group hallucination. I know that when films are being taken, or when we are being interviewed, my whole desire is for success for the sake of the society rather than because of my part in it.

It appears to me that this phenomenon will have a great impact on research, not only in the paranormal but also in areas of psychology. Man is only just beginning to understand the powers of the mind and of "thought" as actual energies. I feel personally that the working harmony of our group may eventually lead to greater knowledge of what can be produced by the human brain.

DOROTHY: Since becoming a member of the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, I have watched with keen interest most of the experimental work being conducted. At first I was ready to believe anything, but soon became quite sceptical. I have always believed, and still do, in some form of life after death, partly because of religion. This is something that up to now has not been proven and may take forever to do so. My convictions waver though, as more experiments are conducted.

The phenomena which have been produced by our group of eight are still a great mystery to me. I've listened to various explanations from the experts in the field of parapsychology and am still rather confused.

I feel exhilarated whenever our group comes together, and we communicate with Philip. I know that somehow our own physical energies are creating a force, causing the raps and movements, and that Philip is a figment of our imaginations. I do feel, however, that he is an important part of each one of us,

Aside from the research and experiments, I feel a tremendous rapport with the other members of the group and have gained a sensitivity to other people and their feelings.

Since all of this began, I have had some clairvoyance, and precognitive dreams, which perhaps were always there, but did not come to the surface until the Philip phenomena got underway. Perhaps this can be of some help to me in my own way of life.

LORNE: The question of ghosts and hauntings has puzzled me for many years. The weight of evidence indicated that there were actual occurrences of real phenomena, as opposed to hallucinations, suggestion, hysteria, imagination, etc. I felt that the noises, apparitions. etc. were definitely real. On the other hand, I was firmly convinced that souls are not immortal. Consequently,

I believed that "ghosts" of blunted houses were something other than the earthbound souls of dead persons (one would otherwise expect hundreds, if not thousands, of reports of apparitions from the vicinities of Dachau, Belsen, and Auschwitz, for example).

There was a suggestion that in the case of violent death, something of the victim's personality and the event itself somehow left an imprint on the surroundings. The idea was that under the right circumstances, the scene would be "triggered" and "haunting" would occur

Many sensitive people, grasping an object, can tell something about the identity of the owner, his personality, and about the history of the object. Probably the best example of this is Professor Emerson s "George" [*Journal cf the New Horizons Research Foundation* , Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 14] Visiting an archaeological sue, George has often been able to tell the archaeologists where to dig, what they will find when they dig there, and something of the history of the site and its former inhabitants. Occasionally, he has contradicted the expectations of the archaeologists, and subsequently has been proven correct.

This, to my mind, is the real significance of Philip. He has shown us a mechanism by which real, physical phenomena can be produced from the minds of ordinary people. There are, we know, other people who can produce the same sort of phenomena, sometimes more spectacularly, by themselves; that is, one person alone

If we combine this faculty with that of George's, we have a reasonably complete mechanism for the production of phenomena at a site which is supposed to be haunted. In the spirit-medium séance situation we have only to keep in mind that each person carries information (consciously or otherwise) within his or her mind, and that telepathy can work over long distances just as well as short ones The medium may be drawing the information for the production of answers and images from the

minds of those who knew the deceased Again, this need not be consciously done, and hence the medium in so doing would not necessarily be acting in a fraudulent manner How many drivers understand the principles of operating a car? Do you need to know anything about electricity in order to listen to your radio?

SIDNEY When I started into this experiment I was as sceptical (although open-minded) as anyone else may have been. On the other hand, I realized that our minds are capable of functions as yet unknown to us. Paradoxically, I would be the first one to question other people who claim to have seen a ghost, or to have been actually involved in a poltergeist activity, or who believe they have some type of psychic power

What the group has shown me is that people of entirely different backgrounds, ages, thoughts, and religions can find mutual interest This has been due to a greater understanding by the members of the group of each individual s feelings and thoughts, and this has re suited in a very pleasant harmony within the group

I wish to thank Kenneth Batcheldor and Colin Brookes-Smith who did the original research in this field. What our group has gained from their knowledge will help us to advance the study of this phenomenon, and to leap ahead, if possible.

The importance of this work for mankind is so monumental that mere words are not enough. These experiments can lead only to a greater understanding of ourselves, As for myself, the experience has given me a stronger belief in myself as a person. Involvement with the group has been enlightening; the time and effort expended have been well worthwhile.

SUE: At the beginning of the Philip experiment I was probably the greatest sceptic of the group. The main objective was to create a visible thought-form by using the combined subconscious thoughts from a group of ordinary

people It was felt that this could show that a medium unwittingly could be using the disturbed energy from a sitter, telepathic communication, or his or her ability to produce a substance called ectoplasm, to produce a thought-form of the deceased.

My scepticism was strengthened by my certain knowledge, having created the story that Philip had never existed. Others in the group could search for ways he could be real, but I knew he was only a product of my imagination.

By the end of the first year I was astonished at the closeness of the bond which had formed among the members of the group. They were people with diversified interests, none being similar to mine, and yet they had become very dear friends. The telepathic bond between us had also become very strong. Once the table-moving and raps phenomena began, my scepticism grew greatly. I found myself watching almost obsessively for any sign of fraud. We all realize that at times we subconsciously move *with* the table. However, I would now state definitely that the movement is without effort on our pan, and the raps have no known physical explanation.

The experiment is a continuing one. We are still trying to manifest a thought-form, and having once had the table off the floor, we are aiming for the ceiling. We have caused knocks to happen at a distance at a given time, and we hope to be able to move objects, as in the common poltergeist phenomena.

The inferences of the importance of this experiment boggle the mind. Here is a source of energy which, if investigated and developed, could be used to benefit mankind.

The bible says that if you have faith as big as a grain of mustard seed you could tell a mountain to move, and the sea — and they would. It also says that to enter the Kingdom of Heaven one must be as a little child. Having

this faith in any human being's ability to use the energy and recognizing the child-like belief needed, perhaps we are making a start at bringing a bit of that heaven down here on earth.

17.
The Psychology of the Poltergeist Reaction

Dr. Joel Whitton. Vice Chairman cf the Toronto Society for Psychical Research, and a member cf tis Medical Committee, has been associated with the Philip phenomena from its beginning. It is a rule cf the society that the Medical Committee oversees any experiments done by in members to ensure that nobody is subjected to anything that might be either physically or psychologically harmful Dr. Whitton hat attended many cf the Philip sessions and guided the members cf the group to an undemanding cf the psychology cf the phenomenon Dr. Whitton hat contributed this chapter cf the book

In this chapter on the psychology of the poltergeist phenomenon, two assumptions are made. First, that the phenomenon called psychokinesis or poltergeist is a real and external event; the table rappings are not hallucinations or sensory deception, but really happen and can be tape-recorded. Second, the phenomena are produced by human thought; this is to say, there is no clement of fraud and no necessity to physically move or rap the table. I am relying on my own observations as well as on several competent and reliable reports and the documentation of sincere and scientific investigators, such as Owen (1964) and Owen and Sparrow (1974).

I am not going to enter into a detailed argument for the existence or mechanism of the poltergeist phenomenon; no amount of detail will convince those who remain sceptical or

who deny its existence. And those who do perceive its validity will want more than can be afforded in one chapter.

Psychoanalytic writers rarely refer to the poltergeist phenomenon (hereinafter referred to as PG). However, PG can he understood in psychoanalytic terms, as well as by Jungian concepts. Williams (1964) applied Jungian theories to the analysis of a patient with PG Ehrenwald (1954) has outlined an idea of the psyche taking into account psychic abilities (psi) and reports how he treated patients with PG. There is no doubt that as more is gradually learned about PG, current theories of physics and psychology will have to be restated and integrated New information about PG develops slowly because of reluctance to report it, and the common misconception that PG is involved with spiritualism, magic, possession, occultism, "the work of the devil/' and so on There is also resistance on the pan of certain scientists who state that because PG cannot be explained by established" paradigms, it does not exist, The disregard of evidence that ''cannot be accounted for in the hope that it will eventually turn out to be false or irrelevant" has been discussed by Stent (1972). Because PG has been associated in the past with certain instances of fraud, there is sometimes denial of any genuine phenomena.

The above, however, is not to be interpreted as a defense of this author s theories of PG. It is just that having witnessed poltergeist phenomena and assuring myself that there is no element of fraud or deception, and having interviewed and treated patients who report verified PG. I am led to the inescapable conclusion that PG is real, not an hallucination, but something that can be photographed and tape recorded. It is not like automatic writing, where there is direct muscular behavior required to produce the phenomenon. PG is somehow produced by the brain. Recent experiments by Lloyd (1973) indicated that the brain does respond to another person's thoughts when deliberate attempts are made to telepathically transmit these thoughts; these experiments suggest that

there is some "force" emanating from the brain that contemporary physiology has yet to discover.

In developing a psychological theory of the poltergeist phenomenon, there are many items to consider. That an object could float through the air is a violation of a known law in physics that states that an external force is required to alter the velocity or momentum of that object. Yet an object will move in a poltergeist event, seemingly of its own accord, without the application of any known physical force. This observation has led serious men of science to ask — what does it mean when the impossible happens, and how does the psychic accomplish this feat? Despite years of asking these two questions. and attempting to develop some sort of theory to account for these phenomena, no progress in understanding it has been made. In 1945 a psychoanalyst by the name of Nanton Fodor asked the question: what is happening in the unconscious of a psychic during a paranormal event? Based on psychological observations of poltergeist subjects, Fodor developed a theory that poltergeist manifestations were due to a profound cleavage of personality; an explosive loosening of an infantile part of the psyche in which severe conflicts are kept repressed. Fodor acknowledges his theory as an elaboration of an earlier concept, Psychorrhagic Diathesis or the breaking loose of a pan of the soul that was first stated by Frederick Myers in 1903. Fodor believed that this split-off pan of the personality, because of the severe conflicts it contained, generates enough energy or power, or whatever it may be. to in some way affect, or modify the behavior of objects in space. Fodor s belief (hat the poltergeist phenomenon was a result of a major personality disintegration was based on a single observation of a seriously disturbed patient. He did not report poltergeist happenings in individuals whose personality structure was intact, and thus his observations are somewhat biased, as such occurrences do happen in persons who do not have defects in ego structure.

Other analysts and psychologists have since reported

observations and have presented other ideas to account for the various psychic phenomena. A Jungian analyst, Mary Williams (1964), believed, as did Fodor, that the poltergeist represented a split-off part of the personality. Although she uses Jungian concepts to describe her study of a particular patient by the name of Roger who had poltergeist activity in his own home, and in her office, she believed that conflicts — if they become separated from the self, from the ego — tend to manifest through various body sensations; to be perceived in the behavior of external objects Two other psychiatrists, Dr. Ehrenwald and Dr. S. R Dean, have described an area of personality resident within us where extra sensory perception and other paranormal phenomena interact with conscious awareness. Ehrenwald refers to it as “the psi-level of functioning,” and Dean calls it "the ultra-conscious." Both authors have pleaded for more open reporting of psychic phenomena and have raised the possibility of the occurrence of psi or paranormal phenomena in dreams, psychotic reactions, delusions, and out of the body experiences, as well as extrasensory occurrences in psychotherapy. Usually there is a positive dependence on the therapist; a close personal bond or rapport between patient and therapist.

I would like to quote an example of my own. This is an account of a poltergeist phenomenon that occurred with one of my patients. Her name is fictitious, as well as some of the details concerning her life. The events in the office are true. Margaret was a 42-year-old married woman who had been in therapy with me for eight months at the time of the following incident. In my office at that time was a coat tree, about five feet in height, of standard structure with the usual prongs going up, and with two pieces of wood in the form of an "X" at the base. During the winter months, my overcoat, and usually the patient's would be hanging on the coat tree. It was about 20 minutes into the therapy hour, during the period when the patient s transference toward me was particularly hostile but was being repressed and avoided by the patient.

Suddenly the coat tree toppled over and it ruck me on the right leg.

By examining the coat tree and the particular arrangements of the two coats that were on it, I found that it would have had to tilt about 40 degrees from the vertical in order to topple over, and had it been left at such an angle following the placement of coats upon it, it would have impeded my way and not allowed me to pass to my usual chair. As it had not so projected into the room, I was assured that it had been left in an upright, stable manner, and that its falling over onto me was due to an expression of anger from the patient toward me which unconsciously released a poltergeist force. This case was a dramatic example, and not typical, but it does illustrate what can happen. Margaret was a known and verified poltergeist subject prior to her starring therapy with me, and occasionally executed unconsciously such feats as I have described. One would actually have to see the circumstances of the coat tree to be assured that it was a valid poltergeist experience, and I am reminded of Dr. Treviranus' statement to Coleridge, "I have seen what I would not have believed on your testimony, and what I cannot therefore expect you to believe on mine."

Reported and verified poltergeist phenomena can be divided into two groups, on the basis of whether or not the phenomenon can be voluntarily controlled. In the involuntary type, there is spontaneous and induced poltergeist manifestation Induced poltergeist phenomena are involuntarily produced by the subject in response to some conditioned stimulus. The voluntary type of poltergeist activity can be autonomously controlled by the psychic subject.

These two types of poltergeist manifestation can now be conceptualized a little more clearly within the context of the structural model of the mind in psychoanalytic theory. This structural model groups mental events into three categories: the id. ego, and super ego. Here. I am only going to deal with the ego, which is essentially defined in terms of its function. There are two groups of functions of the ego.

The first group are the functions we speak of as "maturational." which includes creativity, receptivity, cognition and mobility. The other group are spoken of as the developmental functions of the ego. These are the defense mechanisms that we use and our modes of relating to other people. According to the findings of psychoanalysis these developmental functions — our defenses and our relationships with others — are usually associated with conflict. Consequently these functions are a learned process. By contrast however, the maturational functions — our capacity for synthesizing our experience, our ability to think, perceive and move around — are autonomous functions; that is they are free from conflict.

In this context, poltergeist manifestation could be considered as a symptom-defense pattern against some conflict. As long as the conflict is unconscious and unresolved, the defense or symptom, in this case the poltergeist behavior is involuntary in its action. The defense or the symptom will be evident whenever there is an internal or environmental event that re-enacts the conflict. A familiar example of this kind of a symptom is a tic. A tic is an involuntary motor behavior pattern that is used by the ego, unconsciously, as a method of coping with some conflict. For example, the conflict between wanting to grow up and be strong and self-assertive and losing the material protectiveness of the family environment. If the tic symptom is associated with conflict, then each time the threat of growing up is encountered, the tic is produced involuntarily. To an outside observer this happens spontaneously, or can be induced when the conflict situation is created for the person; the tic then starts Sometimes it happens spontaneously, and this is because certain things are going on inside his or her mind. If the conflict is resolved, the tic symptom may still persist, but it is no longer driven by conflict or anxiety, and we say it is now an autonomous symptom chat can be voluntarily produced without approaching the conflict situation.

In developing a psychological theory of poltergeist

phenomena, there are three things to consider. First, is there an infantile experience or model of the poltergeist which the adolescent or the adult reenacts or regresses to during the period of poltergeist activity. In other words, is there a model from infancy which an adult later could mimic. Second, what is the nature of the defense mechanisms employed by the ego in an individual poltergeist situation? Third, is there something common to individuals who manifest poltergeist behavior? In other words, is there a typical personality associated with this phenomenon?

In the first few years of life before the capacity for abstract and rational thought develops, many experiences happen to us that are realized as having an unexplained or magical quality. Noises or sounds may be heard and objects may be seen to move or disappear and magically reappear. Sensory experiences of touch or smell which have happened to us before we have developed the ability to think about them may be strange, unexplained, and possibly frightening. For example, a baby may hear the footsteps of someone walking on a bare floor above his head. Looking toward the sound, nothing is to be seen. Not able to conceptualize the fact that the sound is simply due to someone's footsteps on the floor above the ceiling, or to someone moving furniture around, the memory remains in the baby as a strange, unexplained experience. Fear could be associated with this experience, if the noises were particularly loud or startling, or if the baby was alone and already anxious about something else, such as the absence of its mother. In the previous example, if anxiety or fear is associated with this memory — this memory of a strange, unexplained sound that the baby hears — the entire conflict complex, the strange noise and the concomitant anxious experience of separation from its mother, the whole thing may be forgotten and repressed and may lie dormant in the unconscious for years. Yean later, the adolescent or the adult may experience an anxious separation which may then reenact the early memory of the associated strange noises. The

hypothesis that I'm presenting is that in those individuals who have the psychic ability to produce poltergeist activity, the re-experiencing of early sensory memories, because they are associated with a certain fear, leads to those memories being relived or acted out, or externalized in the physical world.

Thus, to continue the above example, the experience of an anxious separation, or any other situation causing stress, docs not in itself cause poltergeist activity This happens because a similar conflict or fear experience has been associated with unexplained memories in the past. Ii is the remembering of the previous similar conflict and its associated memories that directly leads to poltergeist effects in those individuals who have that particular psychic ability. Thus, to an outside observer, whenever an individual experiences specific conflicts or stresses, poltergeist activity happens. Every time there is a threatened or an actual separation from a loved person or object, footsteps or scraping noises are heard in the room overhead The original experiences of strange and unexplained and frightening noises may even have occurred before birth. Mothers are aware that sudden noises or jerking movements of the abdominal wall will cause the fetus co react. D. K. Spelt, a physiologist, in 1948 demonstrated that the human fetus can be conditioned using classical paradigms of dissociation. Soft vibrations on the abdominal wall do not apparently cause the fetus to react, but if these are paired with loud noises—if the soft vibrations occur at the same time as loud noises — the fetus soon reacts in the same way to soft vibration as it does to loud noises — by kicking and moving about. Recently, another analyst, Ploy£, also explored the possibility of intrauterine memories affecting behavior in later life Now. Commonly, there are certain obvious emotional conflicts and stresses in the individual for whom poltergeist phenomena are happening. In Professor Owen s book, *Can* We *Explain the Poltergeist* (1964), there are many examples showing this.

This hypothesis assumes that at some time in an individual's past, a model for poltergeist activity was associated with

a conflict. The next thing to consider are the types of defense mechanisms that are possessed by the person who demonstrates poltergeist phenomena. We can define an ego defense mechanism in the following way. It is an automatically and unconsciously employed mental mechanism to secure resolution of an emotional conflict, or to achieve relief from an emotional tension, or to avert or dispel anxiety. Of the fifty or so defense mechanisms, the following five typically may be seen in varying degrees in some of the reported poltergeist cases; conversion, displacement, dissociation, symbolization, and regression. These defenses are not the only ones which are prominent in poltergeist cases, nor are they always present, but they do seem to be evident. Conversion is a technical word and it simply means the transmutation of aggressive or other impulses, such as rage, love, sadness, that are consciously disowned and unacceptable to the individual, into some disguised symbolic external physical expression. For example, abdominal pains that are unexplained can often be shown to be the result of the conversion defense mechanism, as can hysterical blindness or hysterical deafness. The process of conversion typically contributes to symptom formation especially in psychosomatic illnesses. Displacement is a mechanism whereby internal emotional feelings are transferred and redirected to some substituted external object or person. There is an internal feeling that gets ascribed to some external object.

Dissociation is a process of separating or splitting off the feeling that one has about an idea or situation and relationship from the situation itself — splining off the feeling from the object. In symbolization, something outside of us, any particular object, becomes an outward representation of some internal idea. Regression is an interesting defense and it has two forms. One is what we refer to as regression in the service of the ego. This occurs in hypnosis where the individual voluntarily regresses to a more primitive level of functioning. Another example is temporarily retreating from a stressful situation in order to recoup one's defenses and to reorganize

them in order to go forward again. We temporarily shut ourselves off, regroup ourselves and then move forward. The second type of regression is more pathological and it involves an escape from an overwhelmingly stressful situation.

I realize these are technical terms, but the following case will amplify these mechanisms. Again, the name is fictitious, but the events are real. Annette is a 22-year-old single woman living with her 20-year-old sister, Joan, and her parents. There was a history of sporadic poltergeist activity in Annette and her sister that they could remember as far back as when Annette was eight years erf age. Since it was sporadic and isolated, at the time it did not have much significance for them. Recently the poltergeist activity increased and reached a peak during a week when both parents were away. In addition, the mother was scheduled for a serious operation upon her return. During the week the two girls were not entirely alone, as Joan s boyfriend was visiting more than usual, and in fact was present almost all of the time During this week, footsteps were heard. Annette would hear breathing sounds in her bedroom, and late one night when Annette, Joan, and Joan's boyfriend were sitting in the living room, Annette s bedroom door was seen co slam shut. It could not be opened. One night when Joan was walking across the room, her hair was suddenly pulled back by some mysterious force.

When I studied this case, it became evident to me chat Annette, the older of the girls, and the one without a boyfriend, was experiencing several conflicts. 1 here was an actual threatened separation from her mother to whom she was very close. In addition, there was envy and quite obvious indignation directed toward her younger and more attractive sister with her handsome boyfriend. Annette's own conflicts are symbolized by the poltergeist or heavy breathing noises in her own bedroom, and by her bedroom door closing and refusing to open. The jealousy toward her sister could have been displaced in some manner when Joan s hair was pulled.

As the re-experiencing of early conflicts is utilized fortuitously

by the mechanisms, the individual is using poltergeist activity to defend against these conflicts. Thus, it appears as though the poltergeist is a symptom of certain defenses. The psychic ability to close the bedroom door, and the actual closing of it, is an event that can be used by the ego to symbolize and externalize a sexual conflict. The theory predicts that sometime in the past the closing of a door, or some related event, became associated with this conflict. When the conflict is re-experienced or renewed, as n was during that week, the memory of the door closing is also renewed and that causes the individual unconsciously to actually close the door if the individual has PK ability. When the individual's ego can recognize the event of the door closing as a symbol, it can utilize it to represent the conflict. Thus, the poltergeist activity is not a defense mechanism, but it may be symptomatic of certain defenses. The entire process, this sequence of events, I've labeled the poltergeist reaction. If it becomes verified it may even acquire the status of the Owen reaction. The poltergeist reaction is a unique reaction and I believe it should be grouped with other symptom neuroses, such as conversion reactions. The poltergeist reaction has as its basis infantile experiences, including strange, unexplained noises and objects moving, for which there was considerable anxiety and no cognitive explanation. The renewing of these memories does involve regression. In most of the reported cases of poltergeist activity, the regression is an escape mechanism that has been temporarily invoked because of overwhelming anxiety. When the stress is over, the need for regression passes. When the remembering of earlier memories stops, then poltergeist activity stops.

The incidence of poltergeist reaction is rare and probably reflects the rarity of psychokinetic ability. As the incidence of some of the borderline personalities is also small, the finding of the poltergeist reaction within a borderline personality is an exceedingly rare event. Mary Williams, to whom I referred earlier, has reported such a case, and currently I am treating

such a case. Fodor's belief, as postulated in 1948, that the poltergeist is a symptom of a schizophrenic character is incorrect His description of the violence and disintegration the poltergeist represents is only applicable to those exceedingly rare cases of the poltergeist reaction within a rather unstable personality. The poltergeist is almost always seen in the con text of neurosis or character reaction if the phenomenon is conflict associated. However, as we have learned from the Philip research itself, it is also possible for physical phenomena of poltergeist type to become autonomous. That is to say, situations can come about which resemble those attendant on the production of tics. Like the tic, the poltergeist phenomena occurs when the conflict has been resolved. This kind of poltergeist activity is possible for any individual who has some innate psychokinetic ability.

In the Philip experiment regression was attained by consciously attempting to be child-like — by singing children's' songs and deliberately behaving like children. In this regressed condition, thinking lakes on a magical quality. As opposed to the adult who states that moving or levitating tables by thought is against the law of physics and therefore impossible, the child simply states. "If I want it to happen, it will." Even in the regressed condition, what is called the observing ego — that part of you that's still looking around — is still functioning, and usually this part of the main ego cannot accept the fact that poltergeist activity may be based on emotional conflict, and perhaps it also cannot accept the fact that the self really has this extraordinary power to control objects from a distance This, I believe, accounts for the curious way that poltergeist subjects explain their poltergeist activity — on the basis of external agents or guides, extraterrestrial beings, or energy from spirits. Balint (1955) summarizes this defense concisely when he writes, "Projection states that the uncanny powers which produce parapsychological phenomena dwell not in us, everyday normal people, hut in mediums, healers, in waters, in woods and caves or in God's unfathomable

grace." The hypothesis that I have presented would predict that the members of the Philip experiment are re-experiencing a common conflict. The story of Philip, to which all members of the group subscribe, may offer us clues as to what this conflict is.

It's possible to interpret that Dorothea, who is Philip's wife, has an unresolved Electra conflict. When her father is killed on the battlefield, Philip becomes his replacement, and when any other woman threatens to attract the love and affection of Philip. Dorothea re-experiences her initial conflict with her father, and the poltergeist activity happens. This is what happened in the Philip story; that *every* time Philip, who was a dashing and debonair English gentleman, did approach other women, all kinds of poltergeist activity happened which seemed to be associated with Dorothea.

Dr. Owen, who initiated the project and nursed it through its early stages and closely supervised the group, may have become the replacement symbolic father for the group, and as the group renews its Oedipal and Electra complexes via Philip, poltergeist activity happens. Note that the poltergeist in this particular experiment is involved with symbolization, where the poltergeist becomes an emotional source for comfort and security. Poltergeist activity is the object of the experiment and is what father wants to happen, so in a sense the group regresses during its sessions to an early stage of childhood to re-experience a conflict and achieve a further resolution of it. As such, there is a considerable potential for group therapy in such a group In the Philip experiment the symbolization of the poltergeist is in direct opposition to what we call a phobic reaction. What, in infancy used to be a fearful unexplained phenomenon, strange noises and movements, has now by inversion and symbolization become a protective, loved phenomenon that is approved by father. As well, the actual poltergeist object in this context may be what we call a transitional object, something that gives us security that we bring over from the past — like a teddy bear. However in the

pathological poltergeist reaction such as in the case which occurred in my office, its original effect is maintained, and the memories are experienced and externalized as fearful and unwanted.

In studying the Philip group, one is impressed by the very close sharings of emotional feelings within the group. It is possible that one individual first discovered how to regress and experience a poltergeist phenomenon and then by symptom identification other group members developed it.

In summary, for an individual to have a poltergeist reaction the following characteristics should be present. First, an innate psychic ability and potential to influence external objects at a distance; this had been labeled psychokinetic ability and is quite rare Second, a temporal association between an unexplained phenomenon that could be *a* poltergeist model and a conflict, and this could conceivably be common. Given these two conditions, the individual or group then has to re-experience the conflict in a context which allows the externalization and symbolization of the poltergeist model to happen. Once this occurs, if the conflict can be resolved, then the poltergeist continues, but now it is autonomous and then it becomes voluntary. This is what I think has happened in the Philip group.

18.
Postscript

Hiving evaluated some of the ramifications of the *physical* force of energy projected, we will attempt in this chapter to suggest some possible applications of the Philip experiment. As has been stated already, it was necessary for the group to learn or to acquire a certain psychological attitude or skill before the phenomena could be produced. Other researchers have believed that this skill, or "state of mind," or altered state of consciousness — or whatever you choose to call it — while existing as a natural endowment with some "sensitives" or psychics, can also be acquired and taught to others (See. for example. *The Medium, The Mystic, and The Physicist* [LeShan. 1974]).

It is our contention that the joint thought projection acquired by our Toronto group is either the same force or similar to the force that is projected in a poltergeist situation. In the typical poltergeist disturbance the force or energy is projected, often unconsciously, by just one person, who for some reason or another (in many cases the frustrated tensions of pubescence or adolescence) acquires a superabundance of energy

In the Philip experiment the group learned to combine their focus of interest upon a single object, so that whatever mental or psychological processes they employed were powerful enough to produce raps and movements in a table. The

whole experiment has been part of a learning process for the group, requiring both time and patience. Once acquired, however, the force now seems at their disposal whenever they wish to use it. The question to be asked now is whether any group of people who are similarly oriented and willing to give of their time regularly can acquire the same skill. We believe that other groups can be taught and motivated to acquire the same skills.

After discussing this theory with a number of people in the Toronto society, it was decided, as a control experiment, to try out our theory. We organized another group, who would invent a story completely different from that of Philip. The members of the group would meet on a different night, in another part of the house, and they would use a different table.

As a result of our own experiments, we felt that we could recommend a number of shortcuts to the new group and give them advice as to how to approach the sittings. First of all, each member of the new group read our accounts of the Philip sittings. They also joined the Philip group individually for a few sittings.

This new group invented for themselves the story of Lilith, a French-born Canadian girl, who went to France during World War II, and became a member of the French Resistance. She was, however, caught, and shot as a spy. The group followed the procedure of the Philip group by drawing a picture of their heroine and filling in a complete history. They had only been meeting for five weeks when they first began to get physical phenomena, initially tuggings of the table, and then rappings, which responded to questions in the character of the invented heroine of the story. At this writing, Lilith is a continuing experiment, and it is hoped that later we can report on it fully. We have proved our point: that this is something that can become a learned skill; that any group of people who wish to do so can acquire this ability; and (even more important) that this is a repeatable experiment.

We do not know at this time what use psychologists can make of a group skill acquired in this way, but we have a feeling that it could be useful in group dynamics. This writing is about twelve months after the first physical phenomena began, and we have since acquired a good deal of understanding of the psychological approach to the whole experiment, both through our own observations, and through discussions with Dr. Whitton, who as a practicing psychologist has been both an interested observer as well as guide to the group. Through his comments we have come to an understanding of some of our own subconscious predispositions while taking part in this experiment

In the light of this understanding, we feel it would be interesting for a psychologist to persuade a group of people with normal, ordinary, underlying stresses and tensions to set themselves up as a group similar to ours. We would suggest if possible that they be encouraged to invent a story which has as its basis a situation and/or a character based on the *common* underlying tensions. We feel that in the Philip group this situation may have come about by chance, and this may be why the phenomena are so strong and reliable. Perhaps it would be impossible to set up such an experiment, but it would be interesting to try.

As a result of this learning process, the group found that it has developed telepathy among themselves, Some have been more conscious of this than others, but all have found chat their telepathic powers have increased to some extent. We are speaking here of telepathy from one member of the group to another. It is not as easy to assess whether one's power of telepathy with people outside the group has been enhanced by this experience. We have not as yet tried experiments in telepathy using the collective group mind to try to communicate with someone outside the circle. It would be particularly interesting to try telepathy between the Philip group and the Lilith group. Perhaps the two groups will be able to communicate by means of raps m separate rooms.

Regarding this subject of experimentation, one has to contend, surprisingly enough, with the factor of boredom. A great deal of time and patience is necessary to cultivate and develop the need to be spent in somewhat childish play and behavior Serious-minded adults, having once accustomed themselves to this, and having accepted the ensuing paranormal events as actual (once the initial sense of achievement has dissipated), find the whole thing much less exciting than do the onlookers. The group members enjoy the meetings as a social occasion, and there is a tendency for the experimental aspects to be relegated to the background, while the group chats happily to each other and to Philip. There is a tendency to be continually entertaining visitors by demonstrating the phenomena, rather than to be moving forward with new and different experiments. Since the relaxed atmosphere is an essential part of producing the phenomena, a certain serious need to preserve the scientific nature of the experiment is not always easy to maintain.

We would like to elaborate a little more about the possible implications of the Philip experiment in the field of faith healing. The methods by which healing is achieved are not understood, and the healers themselves usually do not know either the source of their healing power or how they use the power that is given them. Psychics usually seem only to be aware that they possess their gifts. They can usually perform what they claim to be able to do. Some healers claim that they must put themselves into a certain state of mind, or be caring about the sick person, and then they can help eliminate the disease. Others, especially those who perform healing through their hands, say that they feel an energy flowing from the tips of their fingers into the body of the patient. Many patients also claim chat they can feel this energy entering their bodies. It is often described as a warm feeling.

Some parapsychologists, working in the field of Kirlian photography (in which claims are made that energy fields [e g., auras] around a person s body can be photographed by

a special process), say they have photographed the difference between the appearance of the energy fields around the fingertips of a healer when working and when at rest. Striking photographs of this particular phenomenon have been published.

We are wondering (and it must be emphasized that this is only theory) whether, as present research seems to indicate, this healing force is of a physical nature, or whether it could be a variant manifestation of this same force that is producing raps and table movements. If to, is it logical to suggest that a group of people who were able to concentrate this force and project it into a common object of concern or attention, might be more effective than a similar effort undertaken by a single person. We think it quite possible that in faith-healing circles, where the members meet regularly, and where there is sincere and concerted motivation, a group effort may be more effective than that of a single healer. The element of faith seems an integral part of these faith healings. We have proved for ourselves that the Philip experiment doesn't work unless we all believe that it will work, and this has to be a real belief. Our group has come to understand the difference between real faith and just acting as if we believe. Similarly, the healing process seems to be a matter of faith, not only on the part of the sick person but on the part of the healer.

The power of faith cannot be denied, but from a scientific point of view it is very difficult to say just what power it is, The power of the human will, autosuggestion, genuine love or desire — all these and many more possess an intangible spiritual force that, in yhe biblical context, "can move mountains." We have by no means reached that stage, of course, but the biblical expositions no longer seem as illusory or even as unscientific as they once did. We are told how Christ's disciples. once they had the right kind of faith, were able to work miracles in His name. Does the whole operation of the healing force rest on one's faith and confidence in being able to achieve it? There are profound ramifications to the answers

to these questions — if these answers can be found.

If the healing ability is related to the force, energy, or held that is responsible for poltergeist phenomena, and if group telepathic ability can assist in projecting its use, then if may be a very powerful force indeed Very large objects are moved during spontaneous poltergeist outbreaks. Reports ol the movement of large and heavy furniture, which require the strength of two or three men to place them in their original position, are quite common in reports of poltergeist events

These objects are usually moved in complete silence, testifying to the mysterious and uncanny control that can be present in the use of this force. Sometimes objects are moved through closed doors and walls to reappear in different places. If the force is controlled or related to telepathic communication, ii is known that telepathic communication can span oceans and continents, and the effect that distance has upon its functioning is practically nil. Would it be conceivable to think of large objects being moved at a distance by groups practicing this technique?

We are somewhat in the position of people confronted for the first time with the power of electricity and presented with only the most elementary apparatus. We do not even know how to operate the switch, only sometimes we manage to operate it at random. When we are successful in producing effects, we do not know what type of phenomena we are about to produce. We probably are a long way from moving large objects cither in time or space, but it is conceivable that eventually this ability may be learned

In poltergeist outbreaks the actual happenings usually fall within the limitations of what the person or people concerned will accept, if they are conscious at all of being the medium. "Philip docs not step outside the character of Philip as the group conceives him. Spiritualist circles appear also to gel just the phenomena they expect to get. In a poltergeist outbreak the force performs within acceptable limits psychological expectations For example, in one case we know, beautiful glass

and china objects floated off high shelves and onto the floor, but were never broken. Their loss would have been unacceptable to the whole family, whereas in another case, cheap china objects were flung from shelves with great force and smashed.

The young Israeli psychic, Uri Geller, whose ability to demonstrate psychokinetic powers has been astonishing both laymen and parapsychologists alike, concentrates more or less exclusively on bending metal, particularly cutlery and keys, and on restarting broken watches. When asked why he uses his ability in this particular way, he said that while at school, he discovered that he could bend at will the hands of his watch. Once his friends discovered this, it became a son of game. He continued to bend metal because this was what he had always done and he knew that it would work. Similarly, the young English psychic, Matthew Manning, who also bends metal in the same way, started to do this because he saw* (Uri Geller on television, and said to himself, "If he can do it, so can I." Faith again? Suppose these young psychics had directed their abilities to moving something larger, or farther away?

In correspondence from people who have read preliminary' reports of our experiment, some concern has been expressed lest inadvertently the group should be able to perform a feat beyond their expectations. This is a serious consideration for people who might be planning to repeat this experiment. For example, the very real possibility of interfering with the engine of an airplane while in flight, or with an automobile engine. Such possibilities should be considered seriously. Uri Geller has stated that he has been concerned about any possible effect he might have on aircraft m flight. Matthew Manning has made the same observation. Each has said that be tries to be in as tranquil a frame of mind as possible when traveling by air, and to put thoughts of the engine out of his mind.

Jan Merta had trouble with a television set during the time that he was at the height of his feather-moving ability and his friends (including one of the authors of this book) regularly unplugged television sets when he entered their

homes. It is interesting to note that in the most scientifically documented account yet written of the sighting of UFOs, Dr. J. Allen Hynck's *The* U. F. O. *Experience A Scient,fic Enquiry* (1972), the author cites a general consensus of experience of those who had authenticated, close-up experience of UFOs in flight, that *in all cases* the electrical systems of their cars were put out of function *the UFOs were directly our them.* The cars all started normally as soon as the UFO took off in flight. (Dr. Hynick is chairman of the Department of Astronomy at Northwestern University.)

We were told by a friend of an incident that took place when she was visiting a friend s house. Some fruit was offered her in a beautiful cut-glass bowl. She admired it, but she was then told that it had been given to her hostess by a former boyfriend of this same young lady. Obviously the thought of the young man provoked a surge of emotion, because the bowl suddenly shattered into pieces in the owner's hands. Our friend found herself labeled a witch, but this was in fact a perfect example of a spontaneous poltergeist outbreak.

Although this chapter is a postscript, and a conclusion in this book to the Philip experiment, it is by no means an end. The experiment will continue, and doubtless our own thoughts and conclusions will continue to grow.

If Dr. Whitton had put his psychological conclusions co the group before the experiment started, the members would probably have rejected it as being too farfetched. Whether or not we had accepted his conclusions at that time, we have a feeling that the expression of them would have inhibited the production of the phenomena. The very suggestion by a psychologist that one has subconscious motivations, fear, or hang-ups would not only make "normal' people self-conscious but would probably be an obstacle to the all-important need for the group to return to a childlike state. There is a subtle but real difference between childlike behavior and play acting.

Dr. Whitton's very real contribution during his months as observer of the experiment, was to observe and guide, without

forcing any issuers, so that the group gradually became aware themselves of a number of the points that Dr. Whitton eventually made. A few examples of this may be helpful to the reader.

After the initial period, the group quickly recognized themselves as within a "family situation." Their attachment to each other was of a brother and sister nature, and George Owen was subconsciously recognized as the father figure Sometimes Philip was asked. "Do something for George." or "Knock for George," or "Go and see what George is doing," and Philip usually obliged with a rap. Dr. Whitton was accepted, not as a psychologist keenly analyzing their behavior, but as an elder brother

There were certain conflicts or stresses within the group which were a natural (although perhaps unconscious) adjunct of the story itself. These were acted out through Philip in questions that concerned, for example, mention of Dorothea and Philip's relationship to her. In other words, the group's emotional reactions to certain aspects of the story, especially the more personal and intimate relationships involved in the story, were clearly spelled out through Philip's reactions. Any mention of Dorothea was always good for a loud rap, and the group knew this and would utilize their knowledge of these conflicting areas to produce loud raps for visitors or for TV cameras.

There were, in addition to the special tensions which were involved in the Philip story, the ordinary everyday stresses and conflicts which, without doubt, showed themselves within the group. It would be difficult to say whether any single person could produce the effects. It needed a quorum of four persons to produce raps and movements from Philip, but it would seem, from our experiment, that it could be any combination of four people. Dr. Whitton's theory is that the production of phenomena depended upon the previously learned subconscious ability of one member of the group to operate poltergeist phenomena, and that this is a rare

occurrence. If, however, any four members of the group could produce phenomena from Philip, Dr. Whitton's theory is to some extent contradicted. Probably the most likely explanation is that each member of the group had learned, perhaps subconsciously, how to produce phenomena — not as an individual but only within the group—and that this common knowledge was efficacious with a minimum of four members of the group present. This would possibly allow also for one member of the group subconsciously to be more efficacious than another, but not alone, as an individual.

At the outset of the experiment, before the group learned to work together, no one anticipated what the results would be. Certainly the farthest thing from their minds was the possibility that their work together might result in a form of group therapy. Yet this was what Dr. Whitton suggested at the end of the experiment. As the reader may have gathered, as the experiment proceeded, each member of the group was conscious not only of pleasure at the results obtained but also of an increasingly close feeling of kinship with and affection for, the other members of the group.

Everyone feels now that he or she has gained not only self-confidence but also that he or she has become more understanding of other people's problems. The general feeling among the group members is that they have become more outgoing, and in most respects happier, as a result of this experiment. All of them want to continue. Yet no one within the group has used the experiment as a means of individual therapy. Philip hail never been asked by any of them to solve a personal problem. Since they know that Philip is a projection of their own minds and their invention, they have never asked him to predict the future, because they know that he can't do it.

Perhaps a word should be said about how other people have accepted this experiment. There have been quite a few visitors to our sessions, and numerous people have seen the films and our programs. We expected a great deal of scepticism

from some quarters, and we have not been disappointed. But, on the other hand, we have been gratified at the number of people who have accepted, not only the reality of the phenomena and the genuineness of the raps and table movements but also our explanations of what they are. We have been surprised, also, co find that most outsiders find it easier to accept the table movements as more convincing than the raps. We were surprised, because the group took special precautions to prevent any unconscious movements on their pan, and it was much easier for an outsider to satisfy himself that the raps were genuine than it was for the group to satisfy themselves that the table movements were free from trickery. On the contrary, we have always felt chat the raps provided more evidence of paranormality than the table movements.

We would like to repeat unequivocally that the whole experiment was earned out in the spirit of serious scientific inquiry, and for no other reason. This book is a factual account of what occurred and of the conditions under which the experiment was carried out. We hope that this account of the Philip happenings will be useful to other researchers in this field, and that it will enable them to acquire even more knowledge of the strange events that come under the heading of poltergeist phenomena.

Now that it has all happened — the invention of Philip, his unexpected "coming" and our long conversations with him, the filming and the TV show, and finally the writing of this book — we asked Sue, who first invented the story, to retell it, taking into account all the questions asked and the answers given. The story as it finally evolved is related in the following chapter.

APPENDIX 1

Historical Note on Philip's Home

Packington Hall and Diddington Hall are real places—in Warwickshire, not far from Kenilworth Castle. Packington Hall is the seat of the Earls of Aylesford, and the present Earl lives there still. The home is not open to the public. Diddington Hall is some 2 miles away. The then owners of Packington Hall were supporters of Charles I. and Charles II stayed there with Jane Lane after the battle of Worcester. However there is no such person as Philip or the story of Margo and Dorothea in the history of the house.

We chose real places as the base of the story specifically because we can then prove that *historically* Philip did not exist. It is probable that some people will say that we must have 'picked up' a stray character from history, and that our communicator is a 'real' spirit. In Philip's story Packington Hall becomes Pakenham Manor, Dorothea s family home, and Diddington Hall becomes Diddington Manor, Philip's family home. Lord Elsdon and Wharton Castle are based on Alnwick Castle and the Earl of Northumberland.

The historical notes on Packington and Diddington are taken from the local guide book to Warwickshire — a Penguin edition compiled by F. R. Banks.

APPENDIX 2

Historical Concordance to the legend of Philip

Year	Age	Event
1624		Philip born
1628	4	Philip's father. John Aylesford. returns from attending Charles 1 s third Parliament, where he has helped persuade Charles to give the Royal Assent to the Petition of Right.
1629	5	Charles dissolves this Parliament. John Aylesford stays at Diddington.
1631	7	Visits Kenilworth; Sir Cedric promises to take him as a pupil in knighthood.
1634	10	Parents die of smallpox in London. Philip resides at Packenham Manor
1634-38	10—14	Friendship with Dorothea.
1638	14	Friendship with Agnes. Dorothea jealous. Poltergeist phenomena. Trial and death of Agnes.
1639-40	15—16	Scottish invasion of England. Military service with Sir Cedric.
1640	16	Philip at court . Knighted . Friendship with Prince Charles. Charles interests himself in proposed marriage of Philip and Dorothea. Calling and Disso-

		lution of the Short Parliament. Calk ing of the Long Parliament.
1641	17	(Not in the legend: Philip could have gone on (he "Grand Tour.")
1642	18	Outbreak of the English Civil War.
1642-44	18-20	Service with the king's army.
1644	20	Philip fights at Manton Moor (Prince Rupert was in command). Death of Sir Cedric. Philip promises to marry Dorothea. Philip retires from the war. Is married.
1644-47	20-23	Philip manages his estates
1647	23	Charles 11 conspires with the Scots Philip travels to Elsdon in Northumberland. Agrees to be a secret agent in England for Charles 11 and provides refuge for hunted royalists.
1649	25	Approval of Philip by Cromwell. Execution of Charles I.
1652	28	Scots and royalists crushed at Worcester.
1654	30	Philip attends Cromwell's conference in London. Returns, meets Margo. Goes to Elsdon. Returns. Accusation and death of Margo. Death of Philip.

APPENDIX 3

The Experiment to Date

The story of the creation of Philip was first published in *New Horizon'* January 1974, h was followed in July, 1974, by an article attempting to explain some of the psychological skills needed to generate the phenomena. The first article evoked a remarkable response — correspondence from all over the world. We felt therefore the necessity of publishing a fuller account of the experiment As a result this book was written in the early months of 1974.

However, the experiment has continued since then, and readers may like to have a very brief statement of some of the developments. (A more complete account is available in the articles by Ins Owen and Dr. J. L. Whitton published in *New Horizons,* April 1975.)

In January 1974 a short factual film of the experiment ®/as made, explaining how the experiment was first conceived, and what actually happened, and showing actual raps and table movements. The group itself regarded this as a challenge to perform under are lights and before movie cameras, in front of people they had never met before. The movie (which itself has excited great interest) is professionally made (16 mm. color and optical sound track) and may be hired or purchased from George Ritter Films Ltd., 2264 Lakeshore Boulevard West, Toronto, Ontario M8V 1A9, Canada (Tel: 416-252- 2291). his entitled *Philip, The Imaginary Ghost.*

The film was made in the course of a single day — a fantastic day in every respect. That evening the group felt that they were particularly "charged" (if that is the right word), and had a private session after the filming had stopped. Dr. Whitton made a strong suggestion that this time they would be able to get the table fully levitated. The table did actually leave the floor, rising about an inch above the carpet and gliding horizontally more than four feet. Dr. Whitton and Robin Owen both witnessed this, but unfortunately, although Robin had his camera in hand, the lighting and positioning were such that an adequate picture could not be obtained.

On subsequent occasions the table has appeared to be floating but it has never lifted sufficiently for the group to be sure of this. Generally speaking the group has continued to concentrate on production of rapping, because this seems to be the phenomenon which is most easily measured and studied. This has led to a fascinating new discovery. The reader will recall that Dr. Alan Gauld had told us that, in his earlier experiments in table-rapping, acoustic analysis of the raps showed that the rise and fall of the volume of the sound in the paranormal raps differed noticeably from that in ordinary percussion raps, the kind of raps produced by tapping on the table with one's fingers or with any other solid object. The Philip group, therefore, held a number of sessions during which Robin Owen tape-recorded both Philip raps and percussion raps made by tapping the table with their fingers or with objects such as rings, pencils, erasers, etc. Dr. Whitton then arranged for the volume of the sound, in each of twenty or more Philip raps and percussion raps, to be traced out by a chart-recorder The results are shown in figures 2, 3 and 4. The Philip raps die away much quicker than do the percussion raps. This proves that they are physically different from raps produced by normal means.

Although the group have not been especially successful with levitating the table, on occasion the actual force generated has been very powerful. In December, 1974, the Philip

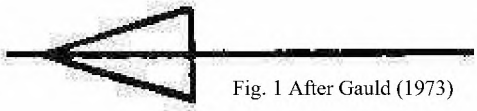


Fig. 1 After Gauld (1973)

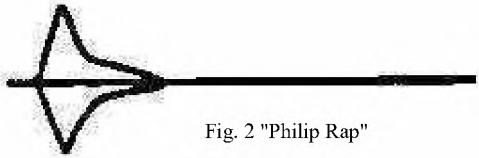


Fig. 2 "Philip Rap"

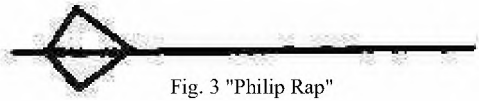


Fig. 3 "Philip Rap"

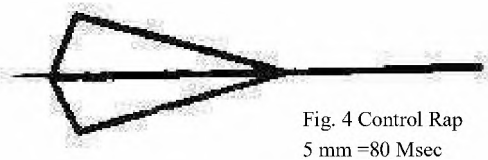


Fig. 4 Control Rap
5 mm =80 Msec

group was invited to Cleveland, Ohio, to demonstrate to psychologists and physicists. Although only four members could go — Al, Dorothy, Bernice and Sid — the phenomena were very good. On two occasions one of the physicists present sat on the table, and was thrown off, once quite violently!

Despite the encouraging nature of that episode the group have continued to produce raps as their first priority. However, on one occasion, following a suggestion by Brookes-Smith, they tried to concentrate on producing a cool breeze, and succeeded in doing so. A witness who was called into the room confirmed that it felt as if a fan were blowing. Following work done with Uri Geller and with Matthew Manning, the Philip group became interested in metal bending, and had success on the few occasions that they attempted it. A delayed effect was typical. For example, a thin metal medallion kept on the cable during a Philip session bent only very slightly at the edges, but about half an hour later when they had all left, George Owen, entering the room, found it totally crumpled.

An interesting confirmation of our theory that a suitably framed group of people can generate raps as apparent answers from any imaginary character they choose, occurred at a Christmas party in 1974- Philip's room, like the rest of the house, had been pressed into service, and a number of the guests, including members of the Philip and Lilith groups happened to be there. Someone, speaking in jest, put hands on the table, and said "Is anyone there?" A loud rap came in reply "Are you Father Christmas?" asked someone. One rap came for "Yes". A long conversation with "Santa Claus" then followed. The answers to questions about reindeer, presents, chimney pots, and the climate at the North Pole were all entirely "in character." The episode was a perfect example of the child like approach to the phenomena that we recommend, and a beautiful illustration of the fact that in these situations "you get what you expect."

Bibliography

Balint, M. (1955), "Notes on Parapsychology and Parapsychological Healing." *Int. J Psycho-Anal* 36:1.

Barrett. Sir William (1917). On *the Threshold of the Unseen.* London: Kegan Paul.

Batchelder, K J. (1966). "Report on a Case of Table Levitation and Associated Phenomena." *Journal S.P.R.* Vol. 43, No. 7 29 (September) pp. 339-56.

Besant, Annie and Ledbetter, C.W. (1969) *Thought Fortes.* London: Theosophical Publishing House.

Branston, Brian (1974). *Beyond Belief* Weidenfeld and Nicholson.

Brookes-Smith, C. (1973). "Data-Tape Recorded Experimental P.K. Phenomena *" Journal S.P.R.* Vol 47, No. 756 (June) pp. 69-89.

Brookes Smith, C. and Hunt, D. W. (1970). "Some Experiments in Psychokinesis." *Journal S .P R.* Vol. 45, No. 744 (June)pp. 265-81

Brown, Slater (1972). *The Heyday of Spiritualism.* New York: Hawthorne Books.

Crawford, W. J. (1918). *The Reality of Psychic Phenomena.* Watkins.

David-Neel, Alexandra (1931). *Magic and Mystery Tibet* Penguin Books, Inc.

Dean, S.R. (1970) "Is There an Ultra conscious Beyond the Conscious?" *Canadian Psychiatric Association Journal.* Vol. 15.pp 57-62 and (1973)"Metapsychiatry: The Interface Between Psychiatry and Mysticism." *American Journal of Psychiatry,* Vol. BO. No. 9. pp 1036-1038.

Ehrenwald, J. (1954). New *Dimensions of Deep Analysis* London: Allen and Unwin.

Flammarion,. Camille (1924). *Haunted Houses* London: Unwin Ltd.

Fodor. N. (1948). "The Poltergeist psychoanalyzed Psychiatr *Quarterly* 22:2.

Hynek, J. Allen (1972). *The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry.* Chicago: Henry Regnery Company.

Ingus, Thomas, et al. (1972). "Auditory and Visual Phenomena in an Allegedly Haunted House." *New Horizons.* Vol. 1. No. 1, pp 35-39.

Laughlin, H. P. (1970). *The Ego and hi Defense!* New York: Appleton - Century -Crofts.

LeSharn. L. (1974). *The Medium, the Mystic and the Physicist.* New York: Viking Press

Lloyd. D. H. (1973). "Objective Events in the Brain Correlating with Psychic Phenomena." *New Horizons* Vol. 1. No. 2. pp. 69-75

Manning. Matthew (1974). *The Link* Gerrards Cross Eng.: Colin Smythe Ltd.

Owen. A R G. (1964). *Can* We *Explain the Poltergeist'* New- York: Taplinger Publishing Co.

Owen, A. R. G. and Sims. Victor (1971). *Science and the Spook.* London: Denis Dobson.

Owen. Iris M. (1974). "Signposts to Sleep: Learning a Psychological Skill." *New Horizons.* Vol. 1, No. 4. pp. 160-63.

Owen, Ins M. (1975). "Philip's Story Continued." *New Horizons,* Vol. 2. No. I. pp. 14-20.

Owen. Iris and Sparrow. Sue (1974). "Generation of Paranormal

Physical Phenomena with an Imaginary Communicator." *New Horizons,* Vol. 1, No. 3. pp. 6-13.

Pearsall, Ronald (1972). *The Table Rappers.* London: Michael Joseph.

Rindge, Jeanne P, (1968). "Are There Healing Hands?" Rosary Hill College. Buffalo, NY,) 2:18-21.

Roll, William G (1972). *The Poltergeist* Garden City, N.Y.: Nelson Doubleday.

Spelt, D K. (1948). "The Conditioning of the Human Foetus in Utero."J. *Exp. Psychology* 38:338-46.

Stent, G. S. (1972). "Prematurity and Uniqueness in Scientific Discovery." *Set. American* 22"-84.

Tietze, Thomas (1973, 1974). "The Great Physical Mediums." *Psychic Magazine* (December 73 and February 74) Pt. 1. pp 30-34; Pt. 11. pp. 28-38.

Whitton, Joel L. "Qualitative Time-domain Analysis of Acoustic Envelopes of Psychokinetic Table Rappings. *New Horizons,* Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 21-24.

Williams. M. (1964). "The Poltergeist Man," *Int. J. Parapsychology 6:423-53.*

Zolar (1970). *The Encyclopedia of Ancient and Forbidden Knowledge* Los Angeles: Nash Publishing Corporation.